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# REPORT OF COMMANDER W. F. LYNCH,

IN RELATION TO HIS MISSION TO THE COAST OF AFRICA.

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U. S. STEAMER ALLEGHANY,  
*Potomac River, October 17, 1853.*

SIR: Herewith I respectfully submit my official report of a mission to Africa, with appendix, maps, and sketches.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

W. F. LYNCH, *Commander.*

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN, *Secretary of the Navy.*

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PHILADELPHIA, *September 5, 1853.*

SIR: In obedience to an order of the department, dated October 25, 1852, I left the United States on the 13th of November following, for the west coast of Africa.

Touching at Teneriffe for information, I proceeded thence direct to the coast, in order to form some idea of the distance inland to, and the trending of, the nearest and most northern mountain range.

Africa—represented as torrid, pestilential, savage, and mysterious, reserved and guarded by the most terrible and resistless influences of nature—has been truly described as nowhere letting into its bosom the waters of the ocean, and, in like manner, projecting into the sea no important peninsulas. From the straits of Gibraltar to the Cameroons, the tame monotony of the coast is interrupted but by occasional isolated promontories, which can only be termed lofty by comparison.

From Cape Cautin to the Great Desert the principal elevations are “Ghebel Hadid” and the “Heights of Idantenan,” and from the north boundary of the desert to Cape Verde, “Los Matillos” and the “Hills of Cintra” alone break the uniformity of a low and sandy coast.

On the 13th of January, of the present year, I saw Cape Verde, the westernmost point of Africa, (in north latitude  $14^{\circ} 45'$ ,) which was first discovered by the Portuguese navigator, Fernandes, about the middle of the fifteenth century. In each direction, north and south, the coast stretched beyond the line of vision, in a narrow strip of sand, fringed with green; except the extremity of the cape which threw up two detached hillocks, of inconsiderable elevation, resembling islets in the distance. On the hillocks were many of the baobab or monkey tree, (*Adansonia digitata*,) which gives to them that verdant appearance from whence the cape derives its name. This tree is liable to be attacked by a fungus, which vegetates without destroying life, and renders the part attacked as soft as pith.

The trunks of such trees are hollowed into chambers by the natives, in which they suspend the dead bodies of those to whom burial has been denied. There they become mummies, dried and well preserved, without being embalmed. This is somewhat analogous to the custom of our Omaha Indians, who place the bodies of the dead in the crotches of trees. Like all other plants of the *malvaceæ* order, the baobab is



emollient and mucilaginous, and Europeans sometimes use it as a febrifuge and tonic. The fruit is large, oblong, pulpy, full of seeds, and of an agreeable acid flavor; and its juice, when sweetened, is drunk as a specific in putrid and pestilential fevers. The mandingoes convey it to the southern and eastern districts of Africa, and through the Arabs it reaches Morocco and Egypt. The ashes of the fruit, mixed with palm oil, serve for soap. The flowers are large, white, and handsome; and in their many petals and violet mass of stamens, bear some resemblance to the white poppy. Both flowers and fruit are pendant. The baobab attains the greatest age and is the largest tree known in the world, its trunk measuring, sometimes, ninety feet in circumference. At one year old its diameter is one, and its height five inches; at thirty years its diameter is two feet, and its height about twenty; at one thousand years its diameter is twelve or fourteen, and its height about sixty feet; and at five thousand years its lateral has so far outstripped its perpendicular growth that the diameter will be thirty feet, while its height scarce exceeds seventy feet. The roots are of a most extraordinary length, and in a tree seventy-seven feet in circumference the top root measured one hundred and ten feet. The foliage is very abundant, and the drooping boughs, with their mass of green, almost hide the stem—presenting a hemispherical mass sixty to seventy feet high and four hundred feet in circumference. Rene Caillè describes one he saw in the valley of the Niger, which, in size, must have surpassed the celebrated plain-tree of Lycia, in the hollow of which Licinius Mutianus feasted twenty-one guests.

Above the Senegal, on the desert of Zahara, the line of sand is no longer bordered with green; and from the powerful refraction there ensues a mirage, which so blends the water with the land as to present the appearance of an illimitable sea. On that coast perished the hapless crew of the Medusa.

It was a soft, golden morning when we made the land; but the sun rose yellow and dim, enveloped in a bank of vapor. In the space of an hour we had bidden adieu to the fresh wind that prevails from 30° north latitude to this parallel, and exchanged the agitated but not angry waves which curled before it for hot and stifling airs and a scarce undulating sea, curtained with a mist formed of its own evaporation. The northeast trade-wind, so cool and invigorating, had given place to the dry and parching harmattan, which, under its other names of samiel, simoon, and sirocco, sweeps across the deserts of Arabia and Africa. During this wind, which, in its flaws of heat, resembles more the blast of a furnace than living air, the atmosphere is hot, dry, and rarified to an almost insufferable degree, and sometimes becomes suffocating from the clouds of dust and sand driven before it. But we were not sensible of the strong aromatic odor wafted from the land, which regaled the senses of Hanno and his Carthaginian mariners in their voyage of discovery upwards of two thousand years ago.

A few hours after passing Cape Verde I arrived at Goree, a volcanic island, formed of basalt and sand, which, with some settlements on the Senegal, three degrees to the north, the French have held since 1816. This island is about half a mile long and a quarter wide. It is strongly fortified; and, from its natural position, the fortress on its summit

is almost impregnable—three sides being perpendicular and washed by the sea, and the fourth a precipitous ascent from the town. The population of the town and garrison is estimated at from six to eight thousand. Besides the fort on the summit of the hill, the place is strongly fortified, but could not long withstand a siege, as it is almost wholly dependent on the adjacent main for wood and water. It is the great entrepot of the French colonial possessions in West Africa, north of the equator.

There were in port, when we arrived, seven or eight French, one American, and two English merchant vessels—besides a French squadron of six sail, mostly steamers. The latter were preparing for a hostile expedition against a tribe to the south.

The river Senegal is supposed to rise in the mountains of Fouta Jallon, and on the eastern slope of the same range it is surmised that the Niger has its source. In about 15° north latitude, the Senegal is joined by several tributaries, and, after passing Galam and the falls of Feloo, makes a circuitous bend to the northwest along the borders of the desert, and, after a course of upwards of 900 miles, empties into the Atlantic at Fort St. Louis. In its lower course, it flows between the Great Desert on the one hand, and a vast alluvial plain on the other, and becomes so swollen during the periodic rains, and sweeps with such a resistless current into the sea, that the latter, which, in the dry season, impregnates the river for upwards of a hundred miles from its mouth, is driven back with so fearful a recoil, that for a mile without the bar is one wide sheet of foam. At such times, entrance is impossible; hence the selection of the anchorage of Goree, which is at all times accessible.

Where it flows by Tuabo, the capital of Lower Galam, the Senegal, in the rainy season, presents a magnificent sight. It fills the plain, and rushes at the rate of six knots an hour by the bases of the hills, which are clothed to their summits with the richest verdure, while the surface of the stream is dotted with uprooted trees, on which are seen standing large aigrettes, whose snow-white feathers reflect the rays of a brilliant sun, and form a pleasant contrast to the green reeds around them and the brown trunks of the trees whereon they stand.

The principal articles of export from this region are the gutta-percha and the gum-senegal—the latter an exudation from a species of acacia, the bark of which is split by desiccation during the prevalence of the harmattan. Towards the close of the last century, this gum was discovered to be more mucilaginous and adhesive than that from Arabia, which, in the arts, it has almost wholly superseded. There are now upwards of two millions of pounds exported annually, mostly to France.

The French have settlements far up the Senegal, and control the trade of which it is the outlet; although they are not masters of the country—a country presenting a vast and interesting field for exploration. In its far interior, in the midst of barbarous nations, a semi-civilized tribe has been recently discovered, which has some religious notions analogous to the Christian, and possess an alphabet and a mode of writing, which, from their account, they derived from a white stranger who died among them, and whose memory is revered as that of a sage.

It was doubtless the traveller Compagnon, who, it is known, penetrated as far as the wooded desert of Simboni.

Except the island of Goree, and the hillocks crowned with foliage beyond it, which mark the peninsula of Cape Verde, there was presented to the eye, in every direction, inland and along the coast, a monotonous level of green, relieved here and there by the feathery tuft of a majestic palm. These were the only interruptions to the in-shore horizon.

From Goree I proceeded down the coast, eighty miles, to the Gambia; the land throughout the entire distance being low and densely wooded, except in one place, where a range of sand-hills presented perpendicular faces washed by the sea. Lying at anchor in the Gambia was the United States ship John Adams, rendering assistance to an American merchant vessel in distress. I felt much relieved when I descried our ensign at her peak. Her presence relieved me from the necessity, for which I had prepared by the purchase of charts and instruments, for making my reconnoissance in a small coasting vessel manned by Africans. It was with infinite satisfaction, therefore, that I grasped the hand of her manly and most excellent commander, and exchanged greetings with her intelligent officers, and looked upon her snow-white decks, her splendid battery, and clean, cheerful, and well-disciplined crew.

I presented to Commander Barron the order of the department, and he professed his readiness to carry out its views. I likewise informed him of the application I made just prior to my departure, asking to be allowed to extend the reconnoissance to the river Gaboon, near the equator, and showed him the reply of the department granting the permission, if it could be done in time. With every disposition to facilitate my movements, Commander B. stated that he could take me along the entire coast of Liberia, stopping at every place I might deem it necessary to examine; or he could proceed with me direct to the Gaboon, and from thence return to Porto Praya; but that he had not on board a sufficient quantity of provisions for both services.

As my orders were positive respecting Liberia, and only contingent as to the Gaboon, and as I had an expectation, scarce short of certainty, that in six weeks the sloop Marion or the steamer Vixen would be on the coast, I accepted his first proposition.

Like the Senegal, the Gambia has its source in the mountains of Foothall Jallon, near that of the Falerne, one of the tributaries of the former. It is a powerful and rapid stream, and is navigable four hundred miles to the falls of Barriconda. Its whole course is about seven hundred miles, setting first to the northwest, and then to the west, and falls into the Atlantic at north latitude  $13^{\circ}$ . The Gambia is a magnificent water-road, which has never been thoroughly explored by Europeans; but there is a current belief that, by one of its tributaries, it is connected with the Senegal.

During the dry season, from November until May, the influence of the tide is perceptible some distance up; but while the rains prevail, and for several weeks after, a mighty volume of water sweeps down in an almost resistless current, and after overflowing its lower banks it encounters the long and narrow island of St. Mary's, which deflects it



a little to the north, when it spreads out and becomes lost in the sea. The island, but slightly elevated above the surface of the water, forms one side of the noble estuary, and lies lengthwise close adjacent to the southern shore. The two low, sandy shores are ten miles distant at the river's mouth, where an extensive shoal forms two separate channels.

On the north extremity of the island of St. Mary's, which is only one foot above high-water mark, just at the elbow round which sweeps the river, is the town of Bathurst, an English commercial and military settlement.

The soil of the island is sand and gravel, intermixed with a brown oxide of iron; and, judging from the overgrown weeds in the outskirts of the town and the size of the vegetables within it, is more prolific than, from its appearance, one would suppose. Towards the main land, the soil is evidently an alluvial deposit from above.

Bathurst is a very handsome place, containing some twelve or fourteen fine houses built of stone, the residences of the merchants, besides the hospital, the government house, and the barracks for the accommodation of English officers and black soldiers—the non-commissioned officers and privates of British regiments serving in Africa being recruited from the negroes of the West Indies.

There are three companies of a West India regiment, always short of their complement, which compose the garrison of the settlements, being distributed among the stations comprising McCarthy's island, 175 miles up the river; Fort Bullen, on the Barra shore, opposite to Bathurst; Cape St. Mary's, eight miles distant, in the kingdom of Combo; and Bathurst, the seat of government.

The government, as in that of all the British colonies in Africa, is administered by a governor and legislative council, whose acts are sent home for royal approval. The Europeans resident here number about forty, including officers, merchants, some Wesleyan missionaries, two or three ladies, and as many of that celestial band, the Sisters of Charity. The rest of the population number about 2,000; consisting of Africans, mostly Jaloffs, Mandingoes, some Foulahs, and an occasional Moor who has strayed down from the interior. Amidst many discordant sounds, the ear of the stranger, as he walks through the market at Bathurst, will be struck occasionally by accents from female lips, which he will at once pronounce the softest and most melodious he ever heard. There is a plaintiveness in the tone, and a music in the flexure of the voice, which is indescribable. I could not learn of what tribe the speakers were, for it is more difficult to designate the country of the female than of the male.

The Mandingo language is considered more melodious than that of the Foulahs, while the later is said to be more copious and to possess a structure which would indicate a former high condition of the race.

Seen through the foliage of the trees in front, the buildings of the town present an imposing and beautiful appearance from the harbor. The habitations of the natives are huts made of cane, wattled around slender uprights and plastered, many of them inside and out, with mortar. Those of the poorer classes are plastered with mud. The huts are usually in the form of a parallelogram, from 16 to 20 feet long, by 12 to 14 wide, and the walls from five to six feet high. The roofs are

conical, formed of light poles meeting in the centre, and thatched with the long grass of the country.

The huts are not built in regular rows, each one fronting on the street, one for each family; but are many of them in enclosures of wicker work, containing two or three or more huts, according to the number of wives of the proprietor. These huts very much attracted my attention, and I visited several of them, each usually containing one or two beds made of mats, spread on fixtures to the wall, a few chairs, and a table, on which was exhibited the household crockery. Excepting that they are better finished, these huts are, I am told, fair specimens of those in the neighboring country; but the bed-fixtures, the chairs, the tables, and the crockery, are the results of close contact with civilization. The native inhabitants of the town are nearly all Mohammedans—some few are Pagans; but, so far as I could learn, there was not an adult Christian among them. Nearly all wear gree-grees or charms, consisting of a bit of camwood, a tooth of some wild animal, or a sentence from the Koran, cased in skin. Their dress is flowing and very graceful, consisting, with some slight variety, of a white cloth wrapped around the loins and extending to the knees, and another with an aperture for the head, resting upon the shoulders, like the berneos of the Syrian horseman.

The Jaloff is the tallest race of men I have ever seen, and forcibly reminded me of the fabulous accounts of the Patagonians. They inhabit the vast district extending along the coast from the Gambia to the Senegal. Their frames are rather slight than muscular: they are coal-black in their complexions, and have the short, crisped hair peculiar to the negro race; but have not the thick lips, flat nose, and low, receding forehead which, in our ideas, are associated with the features of the African. On the contrary, with the Caucasian, they have prominent noses, and their foreheads are high but narrowing at the temples. Each one carries himself as stately as if he were a monarch—the women as much so as the men, and with the same proportion as elsewhere, in the respective size of the sexes. I am not alone in the opinion that the females are, on an average, as tall as men are with us. It is a very interesting race. The Europeans here represent them as easily managed by gentle means, but exceedingly dangerous when provoked, and as being very expert in the use of fire-arms. In point of stature they correspond with the Berri, a tall race of men towards the other side of the continent. The Jaloffs are high-toned and courteous; and, in contradistinction to the other tribes, are called by foreigners the “gentlemen of Africa.”

The Mandingoes are from the banks of the Gambia, from Manding down to the coast. It is a numerous and powerful race, with more of the characteristic features of the negro than the Jaloffs. They are represented as lively in their dispositions, prone to traffic, and with some taste for literature—a literature confined to the Koran. It is said they read no other book, and are taught no other lessons in their schools but an unmeaning repetition of its laws and precepts. I question the correctness of the assertion. The songs of the Jelli, or singing men, would bespeak a higher intellectual cultivation. Mr. Laing visited in 1822 the walled town of Kakundi, in the country of Melicouri, and was there

introduced to King Yaradee, one of the chiefs of Sulima. On that occasion was recited the following song, which is almost as poetic and far more genuine than the fabled poems of Ossian. It commemorates an advantage gained by Yaradee over the Foulahs, at the time when ten thousand of them, headed by Ba Dembah, laid siege to Falata:

"Shake off that drowsiness, brave Yaradee, thou lion of war! Hang thy sword to thy side, and be thyself! Dost thou not behold the army of the Foulahs? Observe their lines of muskets and spears, vying in brightness with the rays of the departing sun! They are strong and powerful; yea, they are men! and they have sworn on the Al Koran that they will destroy the capital of the Sulima nation. So, shake off that drowsiness, brave Yaradee, thou lion of war! The brave Talaheer, thy sire, held the Foulahs in contempt. Fear was a stranger to his bosom! He set the firebrand to Timbo, that nest of the Islamites; and, though worsted at Herico, he scorned to quit the field, but fell like a hero, cheering his war-men. If thou art worthy to be called the son of Talaheer, shake off that drowsiness, brave Yaradee, thou lion of war!

"Brave Yaradee stirred. He shook his garments of war, as the soaring eagle ruffles his pinions. Ten times he addressed his gree-grees, and swore to them that he would either return in triumph to the sound of the war-drum, or that the cries of the Jelli should bewail his fall. The war-men shouted with joy.

"Behold! he shakes from him that drowsiness, the lion of war! he hangs his sword by his side, and is now himself!

"Follow me to the field! exclaimed the heroic Yaradee! Fear nothing! for, let the spear be sharp, or the ball be swift, faith in your gree-grees will preserve you from danger. Follow me to the field; for I am roused, and have shook off that drowsiness. I am brave Yaradee, the lion of war! I have hung my sword by my side, and am myself. I have shook off that drowsiness. The war-drum sounds, and the sweet notes of the balla encourage warriors to deeds of arms. The valiant Yaradee mounts his steed! His headmen follow! The northern gate of Falaba is thrown open, and they rush from it with the swiftness of leopards. Yaradee is a host in himself! Observe how he wields his sword! They fall before him! They stagger! They reel! Foulah men! you will long remember this day! for Yaradee has shook off his drowsiness, the lion of war! He has hung his sword by his side, and is himself."

By way of contrast of the turn of thought and mode of expression, I give the account of a Bornou man, related by himself:

"My years were eighteen. There was war. At that time my mother died. My father died. I buried them. I had done. The Foulahs caught me. They sold me. The Housa people bought us. They brought us to Tomba. We got up. We came to the Popo country. The Popoes took us. To a white man they sold us. The white man took us. We had no shirts. We had no trousers. We were naked. Into the midst of the water—into the midst of a ship they put us. Thirst killed somebody. Hunger killed somebody. By night we prayed. At sun-time we prayed. God heard us. The English are good. God sent them. They came. They took us. Our hunger died.



Our thirst died. Our chains went off from our feet. Shirts they gave us. Trousers they gave us. Hats they gave us. Every one was glad. We all praised the English. Whoever displeases the English, into hell let him go."

The Mandingoes manufacture cotton cloths, and dye them with indigo and other vegetable dyes in colors so fixed as to resist, it is said, the action of acids, and light—a quality surpassing that of any other known dye-stuff in the world. The Mandingo indigo-plant, as it is here called, has a deep-green leaf, with a number of spear-shaped leaflets along the sides of a common leaf-stalk, opposite to each other and abruptly winged, and may therefore be classed among compound leaves. From thirty leaves of this plant, nearly an ounce of pure indigo has been obtained. The Mandingoes are skilled also in the tanning of hides, and the preparation of leather; and the specimens which I saw of their bridles, whips, pouches, sword and dagger sheaths, and powder-horns, far surpass all I had conceived of native manufacture.

The Foulahs or Fellatas are rigid Mohammedans, and are very distinct from the Jaloffs and Mandingoes. They sustain the remark that the inhabitants of an inland country are of lighter complexion than those who reside on the seacoast in the same parallel of latitude. They are lighter-colored, their noses are more prominent, and their general features partake more of the Nubian than of an African tribe bordering on the great desert.

There is an ancient tradition cherished by them of their being descendants of a white race, and they have often assigned it as a reason why they should have no interests conflicting with those whose origin they regard as the same with their own. Those seen at Bathurst are from the countries north and south of the Gambia, above McCarthy's island. Although they have made a few settlements on the southern bank, they do not, in general, evince a taste for agricultural pursuits. They are warlike shepherds, and are overrunning Western and Central Africa with as much zeal, and with equal success, as the Saracens did the northern shore of the continent in the seventh century. They are ever at war, and warring but to conquer; with the sword and the Koran they exterminate paganism wherever they appear.

At the close of the last century there was not a Mohammedan south of Cape Verde or west of Footah Torra. Now, of the two millions of inhabitants occupying that country, two-thirds are Mohammedans. At present, a religious war is raging within two miles of Bathurst; and the English officer, in his evening ride, can hear the report of fire-arms and the uproar of battle. Not long since the combatants approached so near that their bullets struck the barrack-wall and the houses and fences of European residents. I have mentioned a French squadron fitting out in Gorce for the purpose of attacking a tribe lower down the coast. The circumstance was related in the presence of the governor here; and an officer of the garrison, who had just arrived upon the station, remarked, that in his opinion one small steamer and a hundred men would be sufficient for the purpose. "Far from it," replied the governor; "and you will think so, too, when you have been longer in Africa. There are, at this moment," he added, "people within fifteen miles of us whom we dare not attack."



The Foulahs have warred against the Tauriyacks in the north, and the negroes of Bambara in the south. With the Jaloff's and Mandingoes, they occupy much of the western coast; and in the interior of the continent have subjugated Yoruba, Nyfee, and Housa. They now extend from the Atlantic to the Niger, and from the Senegal to within a few days' march of the Gulf of Guinea; and within the present century have founded Soccato, the capital of their empire. Wherever they have settled, pagan idolatry is said to have disappeared, and human sacrifices are abolished. In one respect their success will check the traffic in slaves, and thus prove beneficial to humanity. By their civil code, derived from the Koran, it is forbidden to enslave any one born of free parents, and professing the religion of Mohammed; and the slave of a kafir, by embracing Islamism, becomes, *ipso facto*, free.

By the abolition of human sacrifices, and the substitution of the worship of the true God for that of senseless idols, the Foulahs are unquestionably ministers of good to Africa; but it may be doubted whether, under the Mohammedan rule, that country will present less difficulties than at present to the advancement of Christianity within it. The theology of Islamism is unexceptionable. "Obedience leads the way to heaven; fasting and self-denial give it rapid progress; and alms-deeds open the door."

But, unhappily, all kafirs—a term embracing Christians and infidels—are excluded from their charity. Intolerant in their bigotry, the very exercise of what they believe to be virtues begets a spirit of self-righteousness, which may prove the greatest obstacle to their conversion.

The commerce of the Gambia, already great, is rapidly increasing. Bathurst is the port of entry for all the settlements on the river, except the French colony of Albreda. There are no discriminating tonnage duties; and, except sixpence per gallon on wines and spirits, and one farthing per pound on tobacco, the import duty on all goods, British and foreign, is four per cent. A comparison of the official returns of 1840 and that of 1851 (the last rendered) will convey an accurate idea of the advance of commerce.

In 1840 the foreign tonnage entered was 6,922 tons, and that of 1851 was 21,596 tons; while the difference between the aggregate imports and exports was \$325,000. This difference is annually increasing, and the exports of 1851 exceeded those of the preceding year \$120,000. In 1835 there were but 47 tons of ground-nuts raised on the Gambia. In 1845 the trade in that article commenced, and it was exported to the amount of \$995. In 1851, including 1,000 tons from Albreda, there were upwards of 12,000 tons exported, amounting to \$720,000, one-fifteenth of which found its way to the United States, and about the same proportion to Great Britain. Nearly five-sixths of the whole amount is exported to France, where an oil is expressed from it, which is used for the table and for supplying lamps. It is much esteemed, and is said never to become rancid.

It will be perceived that extra duties are levied on the principal articles imported from the United States. But it is not fair to infer that they are imposed in a spirit of illiberality. No man, who is a friend to

his race, would regret, if the tax on New England rum and all intoxicating drinks amounted, everywhere, to a total prohibition. As for tobacco, the very light duty imposed aids the revenue, while it does not lessen the importation; for it is an indispensable article in the African trade; and whatever he sells, the native requires a part of the payment to be made in tobacco. Of this staple of our country, we last year imported into the Gambia one and a half million pounds. Our other imports for the same period included one thousand barrels of flour and two hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of cotton goods, besides salt provisions, hams, potatoes, furniture, shoes, hats, &c., to a large amount. Hides form a considerable portion of the exports, and are sent almost exclusively to our country; and at least one-fourth of the imports are from the United States, exclusive of the tobacco brought in vessels of other nations.

Leaving the Gambia, we stretched a little from the land, to pass outside the Isles de Los, and steered our course for Sierra Leone. The coast is low and thickly wooded, with occasional clumps of trees showing above the surface. These clumps, alone visible at times above the misty exhalations of the land, like the hillocks of Cape Verde, resemble islands in the distance. With these interruptions, the scene inland was as level and monotonous as that to seaward. On the one hand an unbroken mass of foliage, and on the other a slumbering sea, with a mist brooding over it, which narrowed the limits of the horizon.

Our passage was a long and tedious one, and the weather was most relaxing. By day we had light and fitful airs, which scarce agitated the hazy atmosphere through which the rays of the sun penetrated with scorching heat, while the eye shrunk in pain from the glare of light. During the night calms mostly prevailed, but the heated air kept evaporation suspended, except when the wind shifted to the north, and then the dew was copious. Notwithstanding the heat was most trying to the system, the average temperature was only 83°. Our progress was as much accelerated by a southerly current as by wind and canvass. In our course we passed the mouths of the Rio Grande, the Nunez, and the Pongo. The former is more a deep bay, with numerous islands, than an estuary; the two latter are considerable rivers, which flow from the interior in many intricate channels, connecting with each other, which, while they increase the difficulties of navigation to vessels of burden, extend to the inhabitants great facilities of intercommunication.

A vessel drawing twelve feet water can ascend the Nunez sixty miles to Kakundy. The town of Tallabuncia, about four miles from its mouth, is described as being situated in a plain, and beautifully shaded with lofty palm-trees, and a great profusion of the lime, the orange, the plantain, and the banana. The men inhabiting it are strong and well formed, but of a savage appearance, having their breasts and arms tattooed, and are almost destitute of clothing. Large holes are pierced through their ears, in which are inserted bits of coarse grass. The appearance of the women is still less attractive. At the commencement of the rains the locust tree on the Nunez ripens its fruit, which hangs in clusters from its branches, and furnishes a great part of the food of the natives at that season.

The coast from the Nunez nearly to Sierra Leone was, until the early part of this century, inhabited by the Soosoos, who drove from it the aboriginal tribe, only leaving them a few settlements along the shore and on the island of Tamara, the largest of the Isles de Los.

The Soosoos are patriotic and brave, determined enemies of Mohammedanism, and subject to no superstition which would not readily yield to the light of Christianity. Their notions of the Deity are extremely vague, and it can scarcely be said that they have any religion. They have some obscure idea of an omnipotent power, and pay respect and homage to departed souls—honoring, with solemn rites and offerings, the manes of their ancestors. They are accustomed to visit certain spots consecrated to the dead, and deposite some portion of their food and call over the names of their deceased friends.

Hospitality is a virtue for which the Soosoos are distinguished; and the stranger, it is said, never passes through one of their villages without being invited to take rest or refreshment. Should the reigning king, in the opinion of a majority of the chiefs, prove too weak for his trust, or should age unfit him for the discharge of his duties, by an act of peculiar significance he is called upon to retire. A messenger presents to him a silver basin containing a piece of white paper. If the king places his royal turban in the basin, he may descend, without disturbance or danger, to the walks of common life, and there enjoy the respect and affection of his countrymen; but should he refuse to comply with this peaceful request, he retains his turban and manifests his resolution to defend it, by sending back in its stead a piece of scarlet cloth, with powder and ball. This is the signal for civil war.

The Soosoos have been dispossessed of a great portion of their territory by the Mandingoes, who occupy the country between the recent conquests of the Foulahs and the sea.

Somewhere in that territory are the Loubies—supposed to be descendants of the Lencothiope of Ptolemy and Pliny. They are represented as a degenerate race—poor and squalid in appearance—who neither cultivate the soil nor follow pastoral pursuits, but manufacture wooden bowls and other trifles, and carry on a petty traffic with the Mandingoes.

The language of the Bulloms and that of the Timmanees, who occupy the shores of the river Sierra Leone, are said to be harmonious to the ear, but surpassed in sweetness by the dialect of the Soosoos. The Mandingo language is more difficult than either to acquire; and, in consequence of abounding in gutturals, is harsher in pronunciation.

In consequence of light winds and calms we had a long passage to Sierra Leone. The river of Sierra Leone discovered by Pietro de Cintra, in 1462, and formerly called the Mitomba, is formed by the junction of four streams—the Bunce, Rokelle, Porto Lago, and Mahara—and falls into the sea in north latitude  $8^{\circ} 30'$ , and west longitude  $13^{\circ} 43'$ . The name "Sierra Leone" was given to the mountain range south of the river from the fancy that the loud reverberation of thunder in the valleys resembled the roaring of lions.

The peninsula, which breaks down suddenly at the river's mouth, is very lofty compared with the opposite shore, and stretches inland to the southeast in a range which soon reaches an elevation of more than



2,000 feet. The range is not uniform ; but presents on the north side detached hills, with valleys between, that increase in width as they descend and sweep down towards the river ; before reaching which they unite in a rolling and luxuriant plain, varying only in the character of their foliage. The valleys and hill-tops were clothed with luxuriant verdure when we saw them. As viewed from the sea, the scene was picturesque and imposing : on one side a low shore, stretching away to the north, which looked dark in its dull uniformity of green ; on the other the lofty mountain range, showing above the mist which rolled up from the valleys and gathered around its waist. The scenery is that of paradise ; but beneath its beauty, like the serpent concealed amid flowers and foliage, lurks the deadly venom which is developed in the rainy season, when its earliest and its surest victim is the white man.

Now, it is comparatively healthy ; and the Europeans of the place, as well as those of Bathurst, forget the alarms and fears of the past in the enjoyments of the present. The river Sierra Leone is, like the Gambia, divided into two channels ; but the southern and principal one is narrow, owing to an extensive shoal along the northern shore.

In approaching the harbor the scenery softens into the beautiful. The breeze which daily sets in to temper the heat of the sun, wafts masses of clouds from seaward ; which, in passing over, cast their shadows upon the swelling hills and outstretching valleys.

At home, we sometimes behold the foliage of the trees wearing rich autumnal tints, while the grass beneath is green ; but here it is reversed : the grass is embrowned by the want of moisture at this season ; while the trees, their roots striking deeper into the soil, retain their tropical verdure. And this tropical character is enhanced by the frequent palm-tree—the ancient and acknowledged symbol of fertility.

Between the cape and the anchorage off the town, there are many ferruginous rocks scattered along the shore : but the rugged appearance is relieved by two placid little bays, into which empty some small streams, fringed with shrubbery ; among which we could not detect the fever-engendering mangrove. The ferruginous soil, the rounded summits of the mountain range, and the small pieces of lava brought up by the lead in sounding near the Banana islands, which lie abreast of it, all indicate a volcanic origin.

Here and there, on the hill-sides and throughout the rolling plain, are cultivated spots, with pretty cottages embowered in foliage, which become more and more frequent in approaching the town. Freetown is built on the northern declivity of the mountain, which towers 2,600 feet behind it—a beautiful, but most insalubrious position ; for the high lands exclude the sea-breeze from the quarter whence it blows in the sickly season, and from the swampy shore on the other side is borne, by the land-breeze, the miasmata which is so deadly to the white man. One can scarcely realize that death can be shrouded in so much beauty.

The soil in and around the town is formed of a brittle rock, consisting of sandstone and a combination of iron with oxygen, having a strong magnetic quality.

In the centre of the town are the stores and dwellings of the European residents and principal native merchants, flanked on one side



by Krootown, and on the other by populous villages of liberated Africans.

The whole is well laid out, and the principal streets broad and rectangular. The houses in the centre town have generally a superstructure of frame, on a basement of stone. They are mostly surrounded by covered galleries, having trellis-work in front; and are detached from each other, with many trees around them. The dwellings of the Kroomen, who resort here in great numbers for employment, and those of the liberated Africans, are similar to the huts at Bathurst in their construction; but, unlike them, they are built in lines with the streets, and not in detached courts.

Some of the Africans reside in the centre town in well-finished houses, and own considerable property. One of the most extensive merchants of the place is a native of the interior. Many of the natives keep small retail shops; but some of their stores are as attractive as those of Europeans; and those who keep them import their goods from England, and export, in return, large cargoes of timber. The blacks are as eligible as whites to all civil and municipal offices—mayor, alderman, sheriff, &c. Some years ago, the governor of the colony was a colored man; and a very intelligent one, with whom I became acquainted, held the situation of colonial chaplain.

Many of the negroes residing in the place are well clothed, presenting quite a contrast to some of the natives of the surrounding country, each with a single garment girt about his loins. The Mandingoes, however, and the natives from Matakong, with the products of their manufacturing skill, twisted and stamped gold rings, and pouches, bridles, and sword-cases of leather, look well in their long white or blue garments, thrown over the head and resting upon the shoulders.

The public buildings in the centre town are the church, the jail, the custom-house, and the commissariat, built of the ironstone of the country, none of them imposing in appearance. Half-way up the elevation, immediately back of the town, is the governor's house, occupying the site of a fort, and less imposing even than the public buildings below it.

A short distance above and beyond the governor's is the hospital, a plain building, in a bad position; and crowning all are Tower Hill barracks, composed of three massive buildings, capable of accommodating 2,000 men. At present there are but 200 troops in the garrison, composed, as at the Gambia, of English officers and black soldiers.

The view from the balcony of the officers' quarters is commanding and superb. The town is spread out in front and on each side. The native huts stretch far up the plain beyond the barracks, and look beautiful in their long lines of streets, so perfectly shaded by orange, banana, and pawpaw trees, that, in places, the walls of huts are alone visible; the brown roofs being concealed by the lofty branches. But there is a drawback to the view on the eastern side—the large and well-filled grave-yard at the head of the valley. In 1833, the population of Freetown was 7,000: it is now 18,000; and that of the whole colony was, in 1851, 44,500.

The population is a very mixed one, consisting of Europeans, Nova-Scotians, liberated Africans and native Creoles, West Indians, Americans, (colored,) Kroomen, and natives of the district. The liberated

Africans and native Creoles comprise ten-elevenths of the whole number. The creeds are as various as the races: commencing with the largest number professing them, they are Wesleyan Methodists, Episcopalians, Pagans, African Methodists, (seceders from the Wesleyan,) Lady Huntington's connexion, Mohammedans, Baptists, Catholics, Presbyterians, and Jews.

The costumes of the inhabitants are as various as their creeds and complexions; the latter ranging from the ruddy cheek of Caledonia to the sable brown of Egypt; the former, from the superfluous garments of civilization to the *puris naturalibus* of barbarism. Generally, the adults are partly clad—the women more so than the men, although some of them have only a cloth around their loins. The young of both sexes under twelve years of age generally go naked; but some have adopted the European dress.

As a love of ornament is a characteristic of the African race, there is reason to hope that, as they lose their reverence for gree-grees, they will appropriate the money heretofore expended for them to the purchase of petticoats and trousers. In such a heterogeneous society, however, the reformation cannot be a rapid one. So long as there were frequent accessions to the population from the slave-ships captured by English cruisers, there was but little progress made in the introduction of the manners and customs of the whites. Now, however, that the horrible slave trade is, or seems to be, extirpated from these latitudes, the present population will, day by day, yield their prejudices and propensities to the influences of Christianity and civilization; but, for the thorough reformation we must rely upon the missionary and the school-master acting upon the rising generation. Daily, hourly, that influence is now being exercised by humble but heroic men; of whom, without exaggeration, it may be said that they deliberately perish, in order that others may live.

There seems to be much activity evinced in clearing the land of its dense undergrowth in the vicinity of the settlements; thus contributing, at the same time, to beautify the face of the country and promote the health of its inhabitants. The whole colony is intersected by excellent roads, forming long, narrow vistas, overshadowed and beautified by the palm and the banana—with hedges of the coffee plant, the leaves of the latter a rich and vivid green. These roads measure seventy miles in length, and are continually repaired by the liberated Africans.

The Bullom tribe occupy the northern shore of the river, and give their name to the district they inhabit. The Timmanees were the original inhabitants of the peninsula of Sierra Leone, and they still reside in and around it. They are described as indolent and licentious. There is a tradition that they were preceded by the Aiguas, who worshipped the thunder-bolt. During thunder-storms they are represented as coming forth from their huts; and by shouts and songs welcoming their deity. On one occasion a pregnant woman was killed by lightning; and far and near the worshippers came in, exulting that with one bolt two were killed.

It is a custom among the Timmanees, as also of many other tribes of Western Africa, to throw a small portion of whatever they eat or drink

upon the ground, as an offering to the dead. The bodies of their kings are deposited in charnel-houses, which are never opened; but there are small apertures through which cooked provisions and palm wine are introduced, the Timmanees believing that they are consumed by the dead. They have houses near their towns, in which are images, skulls, shells, &c., in which their divinities are believed to reside.

I first saw here the cola or gorra-nut, so frequently mentioned by Park, Clapperton, and the Landers. It is the seed of the *Sterculia acuminata*, resembling the horse-chestnut in appearance and growing in pods, four or five together. It is exceedingly bitter, but is considered an excellent tonic by the natives. It has an unquestionable peculiarity. After chewing one, tepid and slightly brackish water tastes sweet and refreshing. The locust tree of this country is very beautiful—covered when in blossom with vermillion-colored flowers, which are followed by pods containing a farinaceous substance, of which the natives are very fond. In the yard of one of the colonists I saw a bread-fruit tree, large and unbrageous, but without fruit, it being too early in the season. The British government might have transplanted the bread-fruit tree from this vicinity, instead of sending to the South Pacific for it. Limes, oranges, plantains and bananas, with other tropical fruits, are abundant in the market. Of fish there was no scarcity; and there seemed a sufficiency of indifferent beef and mutton to supply the limited demand. There was no great variety of vegetables, the cassada, yams, and sweet potatoes being the principal; and poultry was rarely seen.

The movement which led to the first settlement of Sierra Leone originated with the Society of Friends, and the first colonists consisted mostly of London prostitutes and refugee slaves from the United States. The object was humane, but the means adopted most injudicious. Fortunately for the credit of the Christian name in a heathen land, nearly one-half died or fled from the colony in a few months; and in less than a year an African chief destroyed the settlement, and the whole were dispersed. Another colony was sent out and the town was rebuilt, but soon after destroyed by the French. A third time settled, it has, with occasional trying vicissitudes, gone on increasing, until it has become an important colony and the principal of the English settlements in West Africa. It was formerly under the charge of the African association, during which it suffered much from mal-administration of its affairs; but since the government has assumed the control and exerted itself strenuously and successfully in suppressing the slave trade, there is said to be a decided improvement in the character and habits of the blacks. Many of them are well clothed, and all of them are well behaved; perfect order throughout the town is preserved by policemen appointed from among them, each one distinguished by his badge of authority. I heard no quarrelling, and among them saw no intemperance.

The trade of Sierra Leone, like that of the Gambia, is fast increasing. From the official return to the British Parliament, the number of vessels reported inwards at the customs of this port for 1851. was nearly double that of the preceding year; and the amount of tonnage entered shows an increase of 50 per cent. The imports from the United States amounted, in 1851, to \$83,000; in 1852, to \$98,000.



But, in the words of the "official returns," "a very large proportion of the exports are not reported; it being a well-known fact that very many vessels load annually in the neighboring rivers with produce, for various parts of the world, and on account of the resident merchants of the colony, but which are, nevertheless, not cleared outwards at the custom-house; and, consequently, no returns of their cargoes can be included in the return of exports, which only shows the exports of those vessels cleared by the customs."

The exports for 1852 were :

800,000 bushels ground-nuts, valued at .....	\$440,000
( $\frac{9}{10}$ to France and $\frac{1}{10}$ to the United States.)	
400,000 feet timber—to England; valued at .....	500,000
500,000 hides—to the United States; at \$1 each.....	500,000
300,000 gallons palm oil, at 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents .....	100,000
( $\frac{1}{4}$ to the United States and $\frac{3}{4}$ to England.)	
200 tons pepper, valued at.....	400,000
( $\frac{1}{3}$ to the United States and $\frac{2}{3}$ to England.)	
600 tons ginger, valued at.....	600,000
( $\frac{1}{3}$ to the United States and $\frac{2}{3}$ to England.)	
Beeswax not rendered—estimated at.....	90,000
Total .....	<u>2,630,000</u>

A letter received from Sierra Leone since my return here, reports a large proportionate increase for the first quarter of the present year; but as it is not official, I withhold it. It will be seen that the *reported* exports very much exceed the imports; and the inference is, that all of the latter, as well as the former, are not entered at the custom-house, but distributed in the neighboring rivers.

Leaving Sierra Leone for Monrovia, with a fair wind, we passed Sherbro island and the Shebar and Gallinas rivers, and on the second day made Cape Mount.

The country between Sierra Leone and the Sherbro is covered with timber, much of which is annually exported. With the exception of about ten miles along the coast, the Shebar is now the northern boundary of the republic of Liberia. This river is properly an estuary of several rivers; and on the island between it and the sea, the first attempt was made to settle a colony of colored people from the United States. The Boom Kittam river, up which we have a considerable trade, flows in here from the southeast. A short distance up the stream is the Mendi mission, established by our countrymen. They complain that they have frequently been much incommoded, and that once or twice their property and their lives were endangered by the cupidity of the native chiefs. They at one time considered that they owed their preservation to the timely interference of the commander of an English ship-of-war. This is not the only instance which has come to my knowledge of the assistance rendered by officers of the royal navy to our citizens trading to or residing in Africa.

In an isolated position, like that on the Boom Kittam, it seems to me that one of our cruisers should occasionally visit it; for which purpose,



as for many others connected with the suppression of the slave trade and the protection of American lives and property, one or two steamers, of light draught of water, should be attached to our squadron on the coast.

The Mohammedan religion was introduced into this district of country in the early part of this century, by missionaries from Coroango and Toubah.

De Cintra, sailing down the coast from Sierra Leone, discovered the river Gallinas, to which he gave the name of Rio del Fumi, because he saw nothing but smoke along the shore. Until recently the mouth of this river was the most notorious slave mart on the western coast. The factories were destroyed in 1849 by Commander Denham, R. N.

Through the joint liberality of two philanthropists—an Englishman and a citizen of the United States—the territory was subsequently purchased from the neighboring kings and annexed to the republic of Liberia; and in May, 1852, the Cassa territory, which adjoins Gallinas on the north, was also purchased, making the Shebar the northern boundary of the republic.

From Gallinas to Cape Mount, along the coast, and extending about thirty miles inland, is the territory occupied by the Veys, a warlike tribe, numbering from ten to twelve thousand, heretofore actively engaged in the slave trade. They are said to be separatists from the Mandingoes; and some of them are Mohammedans, and possess a degree of intelligence, and are more highly civilized than the Deys and other tribes to leeward.

Their language has been reduced to writing by syllabic characters, and has a strong affinity to that of the Deys.

Sharks hover about the mouths of rivers on the coast; and, during the activity of the slave trade, were particularly numerous at Gallinas bar, on the watch for the frequent upsetting of the canoes which transported slaves from the shore to the vessels in the offing. In 1849, a captain of a vessel lying off Gallinas, who had visited the shore, for a long time feared to launch his boat to return on board, in consequence of the great number of sharks he saw swimming about. When he had embarked, they pursued him so closely that he could strike them with his oar.

As an instance of the rapacity of the shark, and the cruelty of one of our countrymen, Dr. Savage relates, that in 1837 a native boy belonging to Tabou, about forty miles to leeward of Cape Palmas, was taken on board of an American brig, to act the part of cabin-boy. Having offended the mate on one occasion, he received a severe chastisement, and rushed down into the cabin for protection from the captain, who was busily engaged in writing; but the latter, provoked at such an abrupt intrusion, began also to beat him. The poor boy now retreated to the deck, pursued by the captain, and encountering the mate in a threatening attitude, he ran towards the bow of the ship. The captain followed him, pouring forth his oaths and imprecations. The little fugitive, finding no way of escape, sprang upon the bowsprit and leaped into the sea. Here, hanging to the cable, without daring to ascend, he began to entreat the compassion of his Christian employer, who stood leaning over the bow, shaking his fist and threatening vengeance on his head if he attempted to come on board again. It can

hardly be supposed that the captain *intended* to prevent his final ascent; but he *did* prevent it in the end. For while the boy was pleading for his mercy, two sharks were seen to approach, and, each grasping at a leg, rent his body asunder. The next moment the captain saw only the bloody wave swashing against the bow of his ship.

Of the horrors of the slave trade, few have a distinct conception. A single instance, which occurred in this locality, will give an idea of the reckless barbarity which attends it. Prior to recent treaties, English cruisers could not capture vessels of other European nations along the coast, (and cannot now American,) unless there were actually slaves on board. In 1830 his Britannic Majesty's ship "Medina" gave chase to a suspicious sail hovering off the mouth of this river. On board of the latter was a female slave, whose presence, as much as that of hundreds, would insure the capture and condemnation of the vessel. As the most effectual means of removing the poor wretch from sight—for even her dead body would bear damning testimony—she was lashed to the anchor, and with it cast overboard. The search was thus baffled, and the slaver allowed to pass unmolested.

Cape Mount, in latitude  $6^{\circ} 44' N.$ , is a bold and sudden elevation, densely wooded to the summit, which is 1,060 feet above the level of the sea; and it towers over the surrounding country, except in the south-east direction, where a chain of hills stretch inland until they are lost in the distance.

Cape Mount, as well as the Gallinas and Sierra Leone to the north, and Cape Mesurado to the south, were discovered by the same Portuguese navigator, who saw here, as Hanno and his Carthaginians had seen before, many fires on shore, made by the natives, some of whom came off to the ship in canoes, two or three in each. They were all naked, and armed with wooden darts and small knives, bows, and shields. They had rings in their ears; and, according to the narrative of Cada Mosta, in their nostrils also, and wore the teeth of slaughtered enemies suspended from their necks, as trophies.

The eastern base of Cape Mount is washed by Fisherman's lake, ten or twelve miles long, formed by the outspreading of the irregular and sluggish river Pissou, which flows down from the interior, and only finds an outlet when its rising waters overflow a depression in the barrier of sand thrown up by the sea. The shores of the lake, and the banks of the river, are covered with luxuriant vegetation, except here and there a clearing occupied by villages and rice-fields. The huts resemble so many bee-hives on a gigantic scale.

It was here that Pedro Blanco had his extensive slave factories. Besides other goods, he imported, in 1841, 1,800 hogsheads of tobacco, and annually shipped from six to eight thousand slaves; and considered it a good speculation, if one out of four of his vessels reached its destination unmolested.

Twenty miles from Cape Mount is Half-cape Mount river, which, in part, belies its name; for it is a fine river, flowing through a level country, uninterrupted, as far as the eye can see, by the slightest elevation.

From Cape Mount to Cape Mesurado is the Dey country, cut up in small districts, held by petty kings, who, while outwardly acknowledg-

ing the jurisdiction of the republic, are continually holding palavers; i. e., quarrelling among themselves. The word "palaver," with a great many phases to its meaning, generally implies a discussion, to decide upon a right assumed, or a right disputed; or indemnity for a wrong; or the enforcement of a contract. In fact, it is the court of law of the tribes, and suits are brought before it.

The Deys, more tractable but not more trustworthy than the Veys, are somewhat given to agriculture, and possess considerable mechanical skill in the weaving and dyeing of cotton cloths, and the manufacture of household articles and instruments of warfare. They are considered less numerous than the Veys, and are a more indolent and inoffensive race, numbering from 6,000 to 8,000. The dialect of these two tribes has some affinity, but differs from other languages along the coast. Although very imperfect, the missionaries have succeeded in reducing it to significant characters, and translating into it a compilation of the gospels.

At day-light, on the 31st of January, we made Cape Mesurado, dimly visible through a thin white mist which shrouded the horizon. The mist, hanging over the lowlands, but not rising above the tops of the trees, gave to the scene very much the appearance of a general inundation. We soon after heard the splashing of paddles in the water, and in a few moments a number of canoes came swiftly forth from the obscurity, and revealed two or three natives nearly naked, sitting upright in each, and handling their paddles with great dexterity. These canoes are dug out of the bombax ceiba, the pullam or wild cotton tree of the country, and being very light, narrow, and long, with a slight upward curve at each extremity, float buoyantly and gracefully upon the water.

As we slowly sailed along, the mist in the meanwhile rising with the sun, the surrounding scenery, feature by feature, was unveiled, and by the time we cast our anchor in the bay the whole was distinctly revealed.

Abreast of us was a lofty promontory; a little beyond, and partly hidden by it, was the town of Monrovia; and to the east and north a densely wooded country, its sandy shore interrupted only in two places, where the rivers Mesurado and St. Paul's find outlets to the sea—those outlets marked by the foam of breakers flashing in the sunlight.

The pitch of Cape Mesurado is gently rounded; but its face is abrupt, and would present a rugged appearance, were it not covered with a mantle of the richest green I have ever looked upon, resembling, if anything, the hue of lichens and mosses in some sequestered ravine, from the sides of which water imperceptibly trickles. Except a very narrow strip of beach, with a few outlying rocks at the very water's edge, all is one mass of foliage—tangled vines and shrubbery beneath, but above a dense growth of trees, becoming more and more lofty, until those on the summit rear their heads above and half conceal the light-house, an indifferent frame building, stained and defaced by the weather; which, except in its greater height, recalls to mind one of those narrow and neglected tobacco-houses so often seen in our southern States.

In the dense thicket which crowns the Cape was formerly a Fetish-



house, where the natives worshipped some hideous idol; and on the naked rocks, near the extremity of the Cape, was found, in September, 1823, the carcass of a boa constrictor. It was extended nearly at length, and measured thirty-two feet. Its size, near down to the tail, was almost uniform, and, in its then collapsed and shrivelled state, varied little from eight inches in diameter. Its color, when alive, seemed to have been dark brown, variegated with irregular patches of a darker hue. It had apparently perished from starvation.

The anchorage is an open one; but the winds rarely blow fresh upon the shore, and the only danger to shipping is a heavy sea which sometimes comes tumbling in without the slightest premonition. The ridge of highland, the rounded extremity of which forms the Cape, trends inland, in a diagonal line from the coast; and on a depression of that ridge, about half a mile from the light-house, the principal part of the town is built. But many houses are scattered about on the inland slope, at the foot of which are several stone warehouses, facing the broad sheet of water formed by the junction of Stockton creek coming down from the north, and the river Mesurado from the east. A stone's throw from the shore is Carey island, on which the settlement was first made; where the colonists were obliged, with arms in their hands, to procure water for their daily use. Stockton creek separates Bushrod island, a densely wooded flat, from the main land; and connects, at its northern extremity, with the river St. Paul's, one and a half mile from the mouth of the latter.

Just within the swell of the Cape, in a kind of bay, where, except in northerly winds, the sea breaks gently upon the shore, is the usual landing. Immediately back of the crest of the shelving shore, just beyond the reach of the heaviest breakers, is a small African village, inhabited mostly by males, who come from their native districts in search of occupation. Their huts are constructed of wattled cane, lined with mats, and are smaller than those at Sierra Leone and the Gambia. They have no enclosures, and make no attempt to cultivate the soil; but look only to the sea for their subsistence. They are called Kroomen, and their distinctive mark is an arrow tattooed on each temple, the point towards the eye. Their only dress was a piece of blue cloth, sometimes merely a handkerchief, worn around the loins.

From the village we crossed the neck of the low peninsula which terminates in Cape Ashmun, at the river's mouth; and, walking along an elevated foot-path, we saw a number of small cattle, spotted black and white, in fine condition. These, with the exception of some goats, a dog, and a few lean and prowling swine, were the only quadrupeds we encountered.

Instead of turning up to the town by a road which led to the right, we kept along the base of the ridge, and soon came to the wharves, where two small vessels were building and one undergoing repair, and about the stores were a number of palm-oil casks and some large canoes, all indicating a degree of commercial activity; thence, ascending the rough hill-side, we passed several houses, one of them a substantial church, nearly finished, and in a few moments reached Broadway, the central and principal street of the town. This street, and those parallel to it, run nearly north and south, and at regular intervals are



intersected by others at right-angles, all broad and straight, but, excepting a path in the centre of each, much overgrown with senna and wild indigo.

Monrovia, which contains about 300 houses and 2,000 inhabitants, is built, as I have said, on a depression of the ridge which sweeps inland from the cape. About midway the length of the principal street the land swells up like an earth-wave, and sinks immediately down the street, crossing the summit and following the declivity. On the summit is Fort Hill, where, in December, 1822, in the infancy of the settlement, the heroic Ashmun, rising from his bed of sickness, with thirty-four brave colonists repulsed an assault made by eight hundred savages.

The houses are detached, being built on lots of a quarter of an acre each. They are of good size, some two stories, but most of them one and a half, consisting of a single story of frame resting on a basement of stone, with a portico front and rear. Many of them were neatly, and two or three handsomely, furnished. There were twelve houses under construction, mostly of stone; and there were, besides, a few which looked in good preservation; but most of the frame dwellings presented an old and dilapidated appearance, owing to the humid climate during half the year, the scarcity of whitewash and paint, and the ravages of the beeg—a bug—a destructive species of *termite*. For the last reason, all the new houses not built in the native fashion—of wattles, mud, and grass—are constructed of stone, while the old frame ones are abandoned to decay.

In almost every yard there were fruit trees—mostly the lime, the lemon, the banana, the pawpaw—and the coffee-tree; sometimes the orange, and now and then the soursop and the tamarind. The oranges were good, but scarce; and the lemons large and fine. The cocoa grows abundantly, and the pomegranate, the fig, the vine, and a tree bearing the cashew-nut, are to be seen, but not in abundance.

The soil is thin and not productive, resting upon a ferruginous rock which occasionally crops out. The gardens are enclosed by wooden palings, generally in a state of decay, or by stone walls without mortar. In them were only a few collards and some cassada, sweet potatoes, and arrow-root. But it is not the proper season for vegetables, and a few months hence these gardens may, and doubtless will, present a more gratifying appearance.

The suburbs, the river, and the inner harbor, are commanded by Fort Hill, as the outer anchorage is by that of Fort Norris at the cape.

The view from Fort Hill is a very fine one. To the west and southwest it overlooks the houses and the trees far out upon the sea; on the north and east, Stockton creek and the two branches of the Mesurado flow gently through an alluvial plain; and to the southeast the eye follows the direction of the ridge which stretches far into the interior.

On Broadway, south of Fort Hill, is the government house—a large stone building, with arched windows and a balcony in front. The lower floor is used as a court-room and printing-office, and the upper as the hall of legislative council; behind it is the jail; directly opposite is the President's mansion—a double two-story brick-house, with a front

portico—its roof sustained by lofty columns. It is the most imposing building in the place. There are five churches, all well attended. Indeed, I never saw a more thoroughgoing church community, or heard a greater rustling of silk, on the dispersal of a congregation, than here; all were at least sufficiently attired; and the dresses of the children were in better taste than those of their mothers. One of the most gratifying things I noticed was the great number of well-dressed and well-behaved children in the schools and about the streets. The schools are also numerous and well attended. I did not see sufficient to justify the expression of an opinion, except that, while I noticed the attendance was full in almost every one, it seemed to me that, in some instances, the acquirements of the teachers were surpassed by the capacities of their scholars; but for all the purposes of rudimental education the materials are ample. I feel a delicacy in alluding to this subject, and only say what has escaped me from a solicitude that the generation now coming forward may sustain the institutions of the republic.

The colonists were all decently clothed; and of the natives moving about the streets, with very few exceptions, the most indifferently clad wore a long loose shirt, but their heads and legs were bare. One of the latter I saw reading apparently a book which he held before him as he walked.

On the outskirts of the town is a large coffee grove, which did not seem to be in a thriving condition; and altogether, in and around Monrovia, agriculture wore a languishing appearance. This is doubtless owing, in part, to the poverty of the soil, and in part to the overweening spirit of trade; there being evidently a preponderance of petty retail shops. I must say, however, that the town presented a far more prosperous appearance than I had been led to anticipate. From its fine situation it must eventually be a salubrious one. The sea-breeze at all seasons blows directly over it, and in this respect it is far preferable to Sierra Leone. The bifurcation of the river St. Paul's to the north gives, through Stockton creek, its southern branch, a direct and easy access to that river at all times, without encountering the perils of either bar. On the southeast the east branch of the Mesurado is separated by a portage only five miles from the head of Junk river, which flows into the sea thirty-five miles down the coast. Monrovia will therefore be the outlet of the products of an extent of country not less than 1,250 square miles.

During the time of the Portuguese ascendancy, the Mesurado was called Rio Duro, from the cruelty of the natives—a cruelty fostered, if not engendered, by the whites.

It is but fair to state, that the land on the northeast Mesurado gives little promise of being soon brought into cultivation. The banks are so low as to be overflowed at every tide, and are covered, as far as the eye can reach, with an impenetrable growth of mangroves, while the sluggish stream is discolored by the black mud of the marshes, from which, at low water, a most offensive odor is exhaled.

At 13 miles from Monrovia, the east branch is too shallow for canoe navigation; and a quarter of a mile above its source is an extensive morass, overgrown with long grass and mangrove bushes. The scenery is the same as that on the northeast branch. A short distance from the

morass is a native village; the soil around it exhausted from repeated cultivation, and producing little else than cassada.

From thence, across the portage, to the Red Junk river, the surface of the country is nearly level, with extensive fields, no longer under cultivation, skirted with open forests. The soil is light loam, intermixed with sand, and producing only a long, coarse grass. In some places the plain is thickly studded with tumuli, formed by the *Termite belliosi*, (called by the natives bug-a-bug.) These mounds are from 8 to 12 feet high, and 10 to 14 thick at the base: some having been abandoned by the ants, were covered with grass embrowned by the sun, which gave them, at a distance, the appearance of native huts.

While observing as well as I could the condition of things around me, I did not lose sight of the principal object of my mission, and soon after my arrival set out for the St. Paul's, in a boat manned by natives. For the first six miles our course was up Stockton creek, a wide and shallow stream, with a low mangrove swamp on each side, (*Rhizophora mangle*,) which, like the *Ficus religiosa* of India, propagates itself in a two-fold manner: by perpendicular shoots descending from its branches, and by dropping its long, slender, sharp-pointed seed-pods, which implant themselves in the soft mud beneath, and then take root and grow up into trees, with almost as many stems as branches. On the edge of the banks, on each side, the mangroves throw down their long, fantastic shoots, and within them the tops of lofty trees arch overhead, their branches interlaced with parasitic creepers, while through the crevices of the foliage the flickering sunshine streams upon the sluggish water.

From the growth of trees of which we occasionally caught a glimpse through the mangrove border, there was evidently a drier soil some distance inland; but the shores of the creek, with the exception of two small clearings—one the site of a native village, the other the landing of New Georgia—were for nearly the whole distance one inexplicable network of tangled roots and twisted stems and branches. Through this net-work we occasionally caught sight of a monkey frisking about the tree-tops, and sometimes disturbed a crocodile (miscalled alligator) from his sleep, and saw him clumsily flounder away through the mud to finish his slumber elsewhere. These, with some mud-snipes and curlews, were the only living things we saw. Such an effect had the solitude and the scene upon me, that I almost wound myself up to the expectation of beholding the huge iguanodon dragging himself through the fetid slime.

There was not a sign of cultivation, nor of an attempt to reclaim the soil; and the stifling hot weather, the sluggish stream, and the tainted odor of putrescent vegetable matter, painfully depressed my spirits; but when we passed the lower settlement of Caldwell and entered a bold, swift-flowing river, three-fourths of a mile in width, with banks 10 to 30 feet high, dotted with farm-houses, few of them a quarter of a mile apart, it was like the shifting of a scene in a theatre, and I gazed with satisfaction upon the beautiful sight.

Nothing had been told me to excite anticipation; and the transition was therefore as unexpected as it was gratifying. The breeze, no longer intercepted, swept refreshingly up from the sea, but half a mile



distant by the river ; and, turning our boat's head up stream, we joyfully pursued our way.

The banks are uneven—at some places high and steep ; at others coming down with a slope to the water's edge. On each side is a belt of cultivation, with a dense forest-growth behind it ; and the most conspicuous objects of the scene were the light-green, broad-leaved foliage of the banana, clustering about every settlement, and the detached and distant palm-trees, which reared their dark, tufted heads above the surrounding mass of vegetation.

The appearance of this tree is majestic, yet graceful. Its round, smooth trunk springs, shaft-like, into the air, from sixty to upwards of a hundred feet, and then expands its rich, fringe-like leaves into a canopy, twenty or thirty feet in diameter.

The St. Paul's narrows very gradually in ascending it, and to the head of navigation is nowhere less than one-fourth of a mile in width. For the whole distance of fourteen miles from its mouth, there is a greater depth of water in the channel of the river than on the bars ; and, for its length, it is a magnificent stream, pouring down such a volume of water as to render it certain that, however soon its navigation may be interrupted, it has its sources far in the interior.

The soil on both sides is a loamy clay, equal in fertility to the best sugar lands in Brazil. There are on the banks of the river four hundred farms and three thousand cultivators. Many of the houses are built of brick, two of them double-sized two-story ones, and there were seven brick-kilns.

I landed at four or five places, and saw every indication of comfort and prosperity—far more so than in Monrovia. The houses were well furnished, and in one of them was a room, specially assigned for the purpose, which contained a small but good library. The principal articles I saw in cultivation were sugar, coffee, cassada, arrow-root, yams, sweet potatoes, and a few ground-nuts. Among the fruits were the luscious pine-apple, oranges, lemons, limes, bananas, plantains, and the paw-paw ; the last, in cooking, an excellent substitute for the apple. A little cotton is raised for domestic use. The sugar-cane was growing finely ; and at one of the farms I witnessed the operation of grinding it. The apparatus, in part the invention of the owner, was an ingenious one, but very wasteful in its process ; yet the proprietor expected to make nine thousand pounds of sugar and several hundred gallons of molasses this year. I tasted the sirup, which, owing, I presume, to the high temperature, was thinner than I have seen it during the grinding season in Louisiana. Some of the sugar of last year's crop was as light in color and as well granulated as the best Porto Rico I have seen. I scarce think, however, that sugar can to any extent be profitably cultivated, owing to the deficiency of capital and the consequent want of machinery.

Coffee will, I think, become eventually the great staple of this section of country. The tree grows indigenous, can be transplanted with ease, and requires little care in its cultivation ; and, where it is not extensively grown, its berry may be gathered as a pastime by women and children. I was shown one sample raised on the St. Paul's, and tried another gathered in Monrovia. The last, which I did not see in the

berry, was excellent; but I cannot sustain the assertion that it is better than the Mocha. The former was of a clear light color, and the grains were the largest I have ever seen; I am not aware, however, that the large size of the grain is, *per se*, an indication of superior quality.

From all that I could observe or learn from others, a taste for agriculture is becoming prevalent; and I cannot give a better idea of the prosperity of the settlements on the St. Paul's, than by stating that cleared land fronting on the river sells at from \$40 to \$50 per acre. Some of the country seats looked beautiful from the river, and their names are characteristic of their owners; some being unpretending, but expressive; some classic, and some scriptural—"Pleasant View," "Iconium," and "Mount Horeb."

Opposite to Caldwell is the settlement of New Virginia; where, in 1847, the government of the United States built a receptacle for liberated Africans. Higher up are Kentucky, Heddington, and Millsburg. Heddington was fiercely attacked by the natives in 1841, and gallantly defended by a missionary and one of the colonists; the leader of the assailants was killed and his party dispersed. These four are little more than a close contiguity of small farms; but Millsburg, at the head of navigation, and the farthest inland settlement in Liberia, is a flourishing village and missionary school station; and on the opposite side of the river is the mission of "White Plains."

From its situation, Millsburg must be comparatively healthy, and is certainly beautiful. The river, separated by an island into two channels, there forces itself over a rocky ledge with the rushing sweep and hoarse sound of a rapid. The ledge is, however, a narrow one, and a channel through it might be blasted with gunpowder, or it could be flanked by a canal. Above the ledge the stream is unobstructed for about ten miles, and the country through which it flows is yet more rolling and beautiful than it is below the rapids. The soil is a rich mould, formed by the vegetable decay of centuries, resting on a substratum of clay, and covered with a luxuriant forest.

At the rapids are a number of islands, clothed with luxuriant vegetation; and, as was remarked by the lamented Dr. Randall, the islands differ from each other in their verdure, and from that of the main land. Each one seems to have caught, in the autumnal inundations, the seeds and roots of particular plants and shrubs brought down from the interior; for, while differing from those on the main, no two resemble each other in their peculiar foliage.

Above the islands the country is represented as most beautiful, bearing trees of immense size, clear of undergrowth, and having their branches interwoven with vines, and decorated with gaudy parasitic plants, forming a shade impervious to the sun, and imparting a coolness to the atmosphere which is truly delightful. The stream, irregular in its width, sometimes forces its way through fissures in the rocks, and at others forms deep pools, where the water is so transparent that the bottom is distinctly visible. It seems as if the foot of man had never trodden these lovely solitudes, where the silence is only interrupted by the murmuring sound of water, the scream of the fish-hawk, and the chattering of monkeys pursuing their gambols among the trees.

This must, however, be taken *cum grano sulis*; for, in the rainy season the river overflows its banks and inundates the country.

The river St. Paul's has its source in the same range of hills from which the Karamanka issues; and, by barometrical measurement, these hills are 1,400 feet in height, which is about the elevation of the headwaters of the Mississippi. The scenery of the upper St. Paul's will, therefore, compare with that of the Karamanka, although more than two degrees intervene between their outlets.

The late Major Laing thus describes the country bordering on the latter river:

"The valleys are picturesque and fertile, and are watered by numerous rivulets, which, running from north to south, collect behind the lofty hill of Botato, and contribute in swelling the river Karamanka. I was frequently induced to stop to contemplate the lovely scene around me, consisting of extensive meadows clothed with verdure; fields, from which the springing rice was sending forth its vivid shoots, not inferior in beauty and health to the corn-fields of England in March, interspersed here and there with a patch of ground studded with palm-trees; while the neighboring hills, some clothed with rich foliage—some exhibiting a bald and weather-beaten appearance, formed a noble theatre around me. We left the town of Nijiniah, on the Karamanka, and having walked an hour and three-quarters, gained the summit of one of the hills; and in one direction, on the opposite side, a scene quite panoramic broke upon the view: an extensive valley, partly cultivated and partly covered with a long, natural grass, about five feet high, with lines of stately palm-trees, as regular as if laid out by art, and here and there a cluster of camwood trees, their deep shade affording a relief to the lighter hue of the smaller herbage.

"These, with a murmuring rivulet, meandering through the centre, exhibited the appearance of a well cultivated and tastefully arranged garden, rather than a tract amid the wilds of Africa; whilst, in the distance, mountain towered above mountain in all the grandeur and magnificence of nature."

Without being so wide or so impetuous in its current, there is much in the St. Paul's (one feature excepted) to suggest what might have been the appearance of the Mississippi above La Fourche, and below Baton Rouge, before the less pretending houses of the Creole planters were displaced by the stately mansions of the present proprietors.

The St. Paul's connects, it is said, with Half-cape Mount river by a branch that runs parallel with the coast, and both abound in fish and a small species of the "*Hippopotamus liberiensis*," thus named by the late Dr. Morton, of Philadelphia, from *craniæ* sent to him by Dr. Goheen. This animal is said to be extremely tenacious of life, and, except to gunpowder and ball, almost invulnerable. When injured he becomes dangerous; but if unmolested, never, the natives say, attacks any one. The flavor of the flesh is described as intermediate between that of veal and beef.

About seventy miles from Millsburg, in a direction a little east or north, is Boporah, a large native town, formerly containing more than a thousand houses, fortified with a strong barricade. The path to it leads through a dense forest, in which there are elephants and a great



many other wild animals. For the first fifty miles there are no villages, and the only natives met with are the elephant-hunters, who are numerous, and represented as friendly. The St. Paul's passes within 25 miles of the town, winding, in its course, among many islands.

On both shores of Stockton creek, as well as on the Mesurado, are many alligators' nests. They are about four feet high, and five in diameter at the base, made of mud and grass, very much resembling haycocks. The female first deposits a layer of eggs on a floor of a kind of mortar, and she and her mate having covered this with mud and herbage, she lays another set of eggs, and so on to the top; there being sometimes as many as two hundred eggs in a nest. All is plastered over with mud by the tail, and the grass around the nest is beat down with the same member, to prevent an unseen approach of enemies. The female then watches the nest until the young are hatched by the heat of the sun; when she takes them under her care.

In order not to lose time waiting for the steamer which had been promised me, I requested Commander Barron to convey me to the Junk river, about thirty miles down the coast. Leaving an order, therefore, for the Vixen to follow, we weighed anchor in the afternoon of a clear, warm day, and, sailing slowly southward, had the best view of Monrovia, spread out on the cleared portion of the ridge, where it is depressed within eighty feet of the sea.

From Cape Mesurado to the Junk river, the coast runs in a south east direction; and presents, as heretofore, the same low line of sand, with a back-ground of forest for eight or ten miles, where a slightly elevated ridge is thrown up immediately upon the shore. About the same distance from it, but further inland, are the "Crown" and the "Cockscomb"—two isolated hillocks; and beyond them, and thrice the distance inland from the coast, south of the Junk river, are two remarkable peaks with a depressed ridge between, called "Saddle Hill," towering above the sea of verdure, and measuring 1,070 feet in height. Beyond the Saddle Hill are two other peaks, dimly visible in the distance. With these interruptions, all else is a sandy beach, edged with a glittering line of light, where the surf breaks upon it, backed by a vast forest stretching to the horizon.

Anchoring off the mouth of the Junk river, I was compelled to remain nearly two days inactive, in consequence of heavy breakers on the bar. It was the change of the moon; and the colonists maintain, that at such times, from the increased swell, the passage of the bar is impracticable.

When the swell seemed to have sufficiently subsided, with the native crew which always accompanied me, I started for the shore. These men were of the Nifou tribe, whose territory is farther down the coast.

Although muscular, active, and in the open sea fearless in the management of their canoes, a circumstance occurred on our way to the shore, which satisfied me that they are not to be relied upon in danger. Trusting to the head man, who steered the boat and directed the crew, ten in number, how to manage the oars, (for on their skillful management almost everything depends,) I felt no apprehension, and directed my attention to the shore, which we were rapidly approaching. A startling exclamation roused me; and looking back, I saw a low, black

cloud sweeping towards us, and driving a huge wave before it. We were almost on the bar; and the terrified crew were divided in opinion as to whether we could cross it before the gigantic roller overtook us. To be caught by it before we were safely over would be certain destruction. At this trying time the panic-stricken boatmen failed me; and in loud confusion they argued what should be done, when every instant's inactivity increased the peril fourfold. But as soon as the question was settled for them, and the steersman was directed to turn the boat's head towards the southern shore, they gave way with all their might, and, although borne down to the very edge of the outer breakers, we gained the beach in safety. I am satisfied that, with a good pilot, it would be less dangerous to cross these difficult bars in a boat manned by white men.

We landed just below Bassa Point, near the dwelling of a colonist. It was recently built, in a clearing in the midst of a grove of palm-trees; and I found him, with three or four natives in his employment, busied in extracting from the palm-nut the rich oil it yields. After resting a short time under his thatched roof, with the assistance of his laborers, we dragged the boat up the high, shelving bank, and over a narrow strip of sand, and launched her in the South Junk, which, flowing nearly parallel with the coast, unites with the other branches just inside the bar.

From thence we pulled over to the village of Marshall, on the northern bank, about half a mile from the river's mouth. This was the last settlement made by the parent Colonization Society in Liberia. It is elevated about forty feet above the river, and its situation is a fine one in appearance; but the soil around it is poor, and the place far from flourishing. Originally laid out on an enlarged plan, it now contains but thirty or forty houses, built along the river-bank—a few of them frame buildings, but most of them plastered mud-walls, with thatched roofs—many presenting a dilapidated appearance.

The only article of export I saw was a quantity of lime, made from the oyster-shell upon the shore; and I was assured that this place wholly supplies Monrovia, and partly the other settlements, with this invaluable building material. Oysters are plentiful here; but they are only palatable when cooked; and the river abounds with mullet. There is some small traffic here with the natives in camwood, palm-oil, and a little ivory; but it is much interfered with by dealers from Monrovia.

It being Sunday when I arrived, after conversing with some of the citizens, I accepted an invitation to attend church, and there heard a sermon from a venerable colored preacher which I shall not soon forget. I have heard many stereotyped sermons, but never one to move me as much as this. The distant booming of the surf on one side, through which I had to pass to rejoin my companions, and the dark, teeming forest upon the other, tended, no doubt, to enhance the solemnity of the scene; for, seated upon a rush floor beneath a roof of thatch, as I listened to the earnest tones of the feeble old man, I never felt more impressed with a sense of my own undeserving. I mention this, because I conceive that I should withhold nothing which may convey a correct idea of the impressions made on me in Liberia. In a personal sense,

these impressions are insignificant and wholly unworthy of record. Their only importance is derived from the scene which gave them birth, and from the inference to be drawn from it, that Christianity has its exemplars in benighted Africa, as well as in our own more favored land.

About a mile above the settlement is the confluence of two streams—the Red Junk, flowing down from the north, and the Junk, or main stream, from the east. The Red Junk, near its source, is connected with the eastern branch of the Mesurado by a narrow portage. At the junction the banks of both streams are low and bordered with mangrove thickets.

About two miles up the Red Junk there is a native village, and from thence the banks become more elevated and present a more attractive appearance. The palm-trees become more frequent, and, in the space of twenty miles, the scene is enlivened by a number of villages—the light-green leaves of the banana indicating their locality long before the brown roofs become visible. The course of the stream is winding, and its width various; at times but 150 to 200 yards, with comparatively high banks, and again spreading out to nearly a mile in width, with low and sedgy shores.

The vegetation is very luxuriant and much diversified in its character. The scenery of the river's banks is described as rich beyond conception.

"Trees of singular form and foliage spring from the deep, rich soil, and rear their heads to an amazing height; while their branches are covered with a beautiful drapery of vines, forming a dense shade, and hanging, in many places, to the surface of the water."

Looking closely at these trees, a large black knot is occasionally seen swelling irregularly out of the branch to which it attaches. It would be set down as a fungus, but that a more scrutinizing glance detects the head of a snake projected above the coil, in an attitude of menacing vigilance. On the near approach of the boat every fold is shaken out, as by a single effort, and the snake precipitates itself into the water and disappears. It is the well-known black snake, measuring from four to six feet in length and two to four inches in diameter, which frequents the banks of rivers, and is said, by the natives, to be amphibious.

The fertility of the soil, combined with the presence of moisture, gives a peculiar depth and vividness of green to the foliage; and the stream, as smooth as a polished mirror, reflects the variegated beauties which clothe its banks. Occasionally a light native canoe shoots down with the current, or paddles up stream, close along the shore; while among the trees, a short distance back, monkeys are seen springing from limb to limb, in pursuance of their gambols. As on the St. Paul's and the Mesurado, the stranger is little annoyed by mosquitoes and flies, and is struck with the scarcity of birds and flowers.

In the rainy season the first deficiency may be more than satisfactorily supplied, and the moist, gloomy shades of the forest are unfit nurseries for flowers, which thrive best in a light soil and where they can expand their petals to the sun.

Of the birds to be seen in the recesses of the wood, very few are gifted with melodious notes; but by the compensatory law of nature, some of them are magnificent in their plumage. Of these, the sun-



bird, scarce larger than our smallest humming-bird, with its scarlet breast, tinged straw-color at the edges, its emerald throat and back, and dove-colored wings, and a tail longer than its body, is the most beautifully conspicuous. Others I saw wholly of one color—some of the deepest indigo-blue, and others a rich tinted orange. But they partook of the spirit of the solitude in which they dwelt, and flitted silently from tree to tree before the footsteps of the intruder.

Like the Red Junk, the Junk proper has low banks, bordered with mangroves for about three miles from the junction, where the shore rises on each side and the soil becomes fertile, occasionally presenting a slight elevation, on each of which is a settlement comprising three farms of colonists and two native villages.

The river averages about 300 yards in width to King Kymocree's village—a collection of twelve or fourteen low-pitched, mud-plastered huts, with projecting thatched roofs and uneven clay floors. In the centre of the floor is the fireplace—the only outlet for the smoke being the low and narrow door-way, near which the inmates are always, by preference, seated. The principal building, in front of which the king held his audience, was built of wattled cane; but not plastered, being open all round. About six feet from the floor were cross-pieces; on which, up to the roof, was piled rice in the sheaf, to be dried by the smoke of the council-fire. The king is short of stature, but with a muscular frame; and his features altogether are more of the true negro type than I have thus far seen in Africa. He was cordial and communicative; and the colonists represented him as a staunch friend and ally, having in the late war borne arms gallantly in their behalf. He possesses a number of villages—their male inhabitants, like those of the one we were in, being nearly all absent some distance inland, clearing land preparatory to sowing rice. He presented us to three of his wives and six or eight children; declaring that the latter were so numerous, that he did not know them all by sight. His tribe is one of the many ramifications of the Bassas, of whom I will speak further on.

Although scarce beyond middle age, this chief was quite gray; and, in this respect, I have repeatedly noticed the difference between the African and Mexican Indian, whose hair never changes its color. There is also a perceptible difference in the texture of the hair of natives along the coast; for, as I have proceeded south, it has appeared to me to be finer, more elastic, blacker, more shining and crisp, than in Goree and about the Gambia.

Thus far I have not seen an instance of baldness among the natives; but their lips are, in general, as dark as their faces: therein differing from most of their descendants with us; and the whites of their eyes are tinged with a yellow suffusion, which I know not whether to ascribe to the constant smoke in which they are enveloped in their huts, or to some organic cause. I incline to the latter opinion; for the eyes of the Kroomen, who had been serving two years on board of the John Adams, were as much discolored as those of the natives I saw on shore.

Above the mangroves the land has the appearance of great fertility, and teems with every production of an intertropical forest. This stream is broader and bolder than the Red Junk, but the features of its shores

are exactly the same. It is navigable by boats for thirteen miles ; and twelve miles further there is a ridge of high land, east of which is an extensive lake, from whence the river issues. Twenty miles beyond the first ridge is a second and loftier one, from which the blue crest of a mountain is visible to the southward and eastward.

The level land west of the ridges, and the valleys between them, is one dense, wide-spreading forest. These ridges are evidently the outlying shoots of an interior mountain range. From all I could learn there is much camwood in the interior ; and the forest beyond the first ridge of highlands abounds in elephants. The exports of camwood and ivory could therefore be very much increased ; while it needs only a glance in any direction to see the numerous palm-trees, bearing aloft thick clusters of fruit, which only require the hand of industry to gather and express from them the valuable oil ; the demand for which, now that it can be deprived of its stearine, increases with every successive year.

Marshall is injudiciously situated on a sandy soil, which is parched up during the dry season, and is therefore unfit for cultivation. Could the settlement be removed to a convenient point on the main stream, near the confluence, the colonists disposed to agriculture would find more fertile land, while those embarked in commerce could engross the river trade, which, as I have said, is so much interfered with by mercantile agents from Monrovia. Several of the colonists are making settlements a short distance up the river ; and I believe there would be a general movement if the few enterprising men now in the place were not so hampered by a disproportionate number of helpless women. A settlement at or near the point of junction could raise enough for its subsistence ; and, by means of a direct intercourse with the interior up one stream, and with Monrovia by another, unaffected by the weather on the coast, would, doubtless, carry on a thriving business.

From the Junk to the St. John's river the coast preserves its south-east direction, with the same monotonous features, except some red and white cliffs which abut upon the shore below the former ; and inland, the range of Bassa hills and the isolated Mount St. John, which become visible on approaching the latter river.

We anchored off the mouth of the St. John's too late to enter it by daylight. On the following morning we started for the shore, and, passing a Liberian schooner, bound to Monrovia with a cargo of palm-oil, and an English cutter coming up from the southward, we steered for the opening in the line of beach, where, with a graceful curve and a rapid sweep, the river finds an outlet ; and, crossing the bar on a heavy roller, we landed at Buchanan.

Within the bar are concentrated the waters of three rivers : the Mechlin, flowing from the north ; the St. Johns, from the northeast ; and the Benson river, from the east. This great body of accumulated water is forced through a passage narrower than the principal stream ; and when the tide is ebb and the wind blows fresh upon the shore, there is drawn across it a line of terrific breakers. At this season, however, the winds are ordinarily light, and with a skilful pilot the bar can be passed in safety.

On the sandy peninsula between the Mechlin and the sea, just within

the confluence, some thirty feet above the water, is the village of Edina; the streets contiguous to and running parallel with the river. This settlement consists of a church and some twenty or thirty dwellings, of which the former and three-fourths of the latter are frame buildings; the rest are thatched huts.

This settlement presents an unthrifty appearance. The wide rectangular streets are overgrown with weeds; and although there are several coffee groves, the trees are too thickly planted, and the ground between them is covered with rank grass and shrubbery. In the rainy season the path which winds through each street, like a trail through a prairie, must effectually conceal those who pass to and fro, from those who remain stationary in their houses. If I had not known it before, the lean condition of some vagabond pigs I saw would have satisfied me that there is nothing nutritious in senna and wild indigo. And yet there was nothing gaunt or slovenly in the appearance of the inhabitants; and at the first threshold I approached I was greeted by an old colored lady, attired in a silk dress, with corresponding trimmings.

The Benson river pours in its tribute opposite to Edina; and on the west side of the junction is the flourishing town of Buchanan. This settlement was founded by the New York and Pennsylvania Colonization Societies, in 1835, and consists of the emigrants who escaped from the massacre at Fort Cresson, two miles further down the coast. In 1838 the population of Buchanan was 200: it now contains 600 inhabitants, and musters 100 fighting men. The last has become an essential item in the statistics of the place.

This colony was first founded on the peace principle, but the massacre of its unarmed inhabitants conclusively proved the folly of such an experiment, on such a field; for, in the space of one month, in the very year of its selection, 500 slaves had been embarked from the cove; and it was known that the native chiefs regarded the settlement of colonists in their vicinity as destructive of their traffic with the slave ships.

On Benson river, adjoining the town, there was a steam saw-mill in operation; and in the cove beyond it, one small vessel was hauled up for repairs, and two others were anchored in the stream.

Between the Benson river and the confluent stream, before they mingle with the sea, Buchanan is built, on wide streets running parallel with the beach, and they are less encumbered with weeds than those of Edina. Unprotected by whitewash or paint, the houses all present a dingy, semi-dilapidated appearance, except the residence of Judge Benson, on the south side of the cove; which looks fresh and beautiful, embowered, as it is, in an extensive grove of coffee-trees.

The St. John's river is as wide as would be the united streams of the Meclin and the Benson. It is half a mile wide at the estuary; and for a mile further up, is fringed with the mangrove. Thence it gradually lessens in width, and at the distance of three miles is divided into two channels by Factory island, on which Mr. Ashmun contemplated forming a settlement. Above the island the river narrows more rapidly, and does not exceed 200 yards in width at Bexley, a missionary school station, and rather a farming settlement than a village, seven miles from the river's mouth.

Opposite to the mission is the town of "King Soldier"—a venerable



and friendly old man, upwards of one hundred years old. A little above is another island, half a mile beyond which is the head of navigation, where the immediate banks are about twelve feet high.

The scenery is the same as that on the Junks, except that there are more frequent indications of agricultural improvement. After the mangrove ceases, the soil is a yellow clay; and the principal growth on and near the water's edge is a medium-sized tree, from its peculiar properties called the soap-tree; and the more lofty pullam or wild cotton tree, the sassy-wood tree, and the palm-tree. The qualities of the soap-tree are the same as those Herodotus mentions, of the shavings of which the Scythian women made a soft paste, wherewith they plastered their bodies, and stripped it off again when quite dry; by which means the skin was thoroughly cleansed.

One of the farm-houses at which I stopped was finely situated on a rolling piece of ground, some eighty feet above and one hundred and fifty yards distant from the river. It was well furnished and contained two rooms and a kitchen below stairs, and an attic sleeping-room above. It was the workmanship of the owner—an emigrant from Staunton, in Virginia; and the neat, yet strong stairway of wattled cane, and the partitions made of rushes, attested his industry and skill; while a small, but good library, proved that he possessed yet other resources. Himself, his wife and daughter, made the same declaration, which, with two exceptions (and those unprotected females,) I have heard from many others—that nothing could induce them again to take up their residence in the United States.

\* On the banks of the river, between Buchanan and Bexley, are the farms of eight or ten colonists, with as many native settlements; and I think that I counted two brick-kilns; but, as on the branches of the Junk and the St. Paul's, the settlements extend only a short distance back from the river. Including Bexley, there are 250 colonists on the St. John's above Buchanan.

The mission-house, just below the settlement of Bexley, is a fine two-story frame building, occupied at the time of my visit by two male and three female missionaries. They had arrived a month previous, and were still in the enjoyment of excellent health. Although unprovided with a physician, they spoke cheerfully of their prospects, and expressed gratification at finding things so much better than they had anticipated.

I felt a glow of pride, tempered with sympathy, as I looked upon my countrymen and countrywomen periling all earthly hopes in such a noble cause. This is true heroism—the chivalry of the gospel! For warlike achievements, men are almost deified; while the self-sacrificing missionary, who foregoes all the comforts of life, and, with the cross for his banner, boldly penetrates the cloud which overshadows this continent, and encounters certain sickness and death, more or less premature, for the benefit of a benighted race,—the missionary is rarely named, except with the final enunciation, "*Mortuus est.*"

There is a considerable tract of land under cultivation at Bexley. I could not ascertain how much its produce has increased; but some years ago it yielded 600 lbs. of coffee; nearly 3,000 lbs. of ginger; 1,100 baskets of sweet potatoes; 1,200 lbs. of arrow-root; and 300 bushels

of cassada. There were raised, besides, a great many fowls, and some sheep, goats, and cattle.

Beyond the rapids, the St. John's is navigable by canoes six miles further; from whence it is about ten miles to the base of Mount St. John; beyond which is a broad valley, bounded on the east by elevated ridges.

The principal forest growth beyond the head of navigation is camwood, bastard mahogany, African hickory, two kinds of wisniore—both admirably adapted for articles of furniture—and the oak, differing essentially from the species found from the tropics nearly to the polar circles, which is, throughout those regions, a cosmopolite of vegetation, being alike in its fruit, although much diversified in growth and the form of its leaves.

From thirty to fifty miles from the sea is one uninterrupted camwood forest; and the wood is used by the natives as fuel, and for building purposes. They fell the trees, and split them up into billets fifteen or sixteen inches long, which they carry in bundles on their heads to the nearest point of canoe navigation. Instead of this slow and laborious process, it is strange that it has never occurred to them to launch the trees, denuded of their branches, and raft them down the river. The whole world might be supplied with camwood rafted down the St. John's.

Most of the land bordering upon the sea has been, at different times, under cultivation; but after yielding the first crop, a piece of land is abandoned, and a new clearing made for the succeeding one. As a natural consequence, a rapid growth of vegetation supervenes in the deserted field, and it becomes, in a few years, a tangled thicket of trees and shrubs, bound together with the lacings of interminable vines and creepers. Added to which, from the incessant wars heretofore for the purpose of supplying the slave trade, the country along the coast has been half depopulated. Thus stripped of a great part of its primitive growth, and cultivated only in spots detached and distant from each other, the general aspect of the coast is that of a forest of dense and matted trees and shrubbery, almost destitute of its original characteristics.

In ascending the rivers, however, a wholly different scene presents itself. The primitive forest, in all its native grandeur, covers the earth; the graceful palm-tree waves its feathery branches in the breeze, and the lofty wisniore and huge bastard mahogany rear high their towering heads, while among the green foliage is seen the gay coloring of blossoms on many a stately tree, which give a kaleidoscopic variety to the deep embowering wood. Far up the streams, the eye is charmed with the ever-varied landscape: the dense trees which overhang the banks, their towering height and majestic size, the vivid hues of their foliage, and the sombre shade, despite the rays of an unclouded sun.

The profound stillness which prevails in these solitudes was disturbed at our approach, not only by the harsh grating of the oars in the rowlocks, but also by the wild and not unmelodious songs of the boatmen, which caused the basking crocodile to plunge into the stream, the monkey to retire into the recesses of the wood, and the fish-hawk to seek another position from whence to pounce upon his prey.

The territory of Little Bassa has many subdivisions, under as many

names. It is compressed nearly into the form of a triangle by the Atlantic and the branches of the Junk and the St. John's rivers; and is also a peninsula, as these streams approach each other very nearly in the interior. The country abounds in camwood and palm-oil, and the demand for the last is rapidly increasing, as it is now used instead of Russian tallow in the manufacture of soap. Hundreds of tons of camwood, and many thousand gallons of oil, are annually shipped from these rivers.

The new clearings on the river-banks, the steam saw-mill at Buchanan, the vessels in the cove, and the buildings under construction, all attest, with the exception of Edina, that the settlements on the St. John's are flourishing.

About three miles further down the beach from Buchanan is Fish-town, now being resettled, where there are twenty houses under construction, and a considerable tract of land cleared for cultivation. In the environs of the former, and on the road to the latter, I saw a number of cattle, larger in size than those of Monrovia. Their excellent condition-verified the statement of respectable settlers that the neighborhood is a fine grass country.

The landing-place at Bassa Cove is protected from the sweep of the southwest wind, the prevalent one during the rainy season, by Grand Bassa Point, which bends to the north and renders the landing safe, except during a northerly wind. Unfortunately, when I left, the wind blew from that quarter, driving a heavy sea before it. It was near night-fall when I embarked in a canoe, to be conveyed through the surf to the boat, which lay beyond the outer breakers. I took my seat in the little dug-out, which was so light that I could have carried it upon my shoulders, while two natives, one standing at each end, kept it from being swerved entirely round and filled with water, as the waves broke upon the shore and washed knee-deep beyond them. As each wave receded, the two men pointed the bow anew in the right direction, and then stretching themselves up to the greatest height, watched the foaming crest of the succeeding roller, for an opportunity to launch forth and attempt a passage. It was necessary that those who had me in charge should not for one moment be distracted; a few friendly colonists, therefore, unable to assist, stood a short distance back, and watched our proceedings in silence. The scene to them must have been a wild and impressive one: the tiny canoe, the dusky forms of the natives, now and then shown in striking contrast as an angry breaker broke upon the shore, and sent its seething foam far up the beach, and the troubled sea beyond, with the boat in the foreground, tossing confusedly upon it.

We waited so long for an opportunity, that the ship, at first dimly visible in the distance, became lost in the fast increasing obscurity; and the boat beyond the line of surf could only be distinguished as a dark speck upon the surface.

At last there was a sudden shout, a push, a plunge, a rocking violently from side to side, a rapid play of the paddles which seemed more like wild gesticulations than a concerted movement; and, after a few moments' pitching and tossing, more than I ever pitched and tossed before, I found myself alongside the boat, and the canoe half filled with water.



It was a long, cold, uncertain pull afterwards to the ship, four miles distant, against a high wind and heavy sea, and without a compass, which, from fear of losing it by the upsetting of the canoe, had been left upon the shore. We were soon, however, favored with a beacon; for a lantern was hoisted on board the ship. About an hour afterwards a blue light was burned; and in an hour more we pulled alongside, the Kroomen too weary to keep up their customary song.

The next morning we sailed for Sinou, eighty miles further down the coast, a Liberian schooner taking her departure also for the south a few hours before us. The two canoemen, my companions of the night before, came off to bring the compass, and receive a compensation for their services. They also brought a specimen of coffee from Judge Benson's plantation, for exhibition at the New York Crystal Palace.

The Bassa tribe occupies the coast and an indefinite distance inland, from the Mesurado to Settra Kroo, below Sinou. All the colonial settlements of Liberia are within the territory of this tribe. With this tribe, therefore, they are better acquainted, having daily and hourly intercourse with them; nearly all the residents, natives of the settlement, being members of this large tribe, estimated to number 100,000! all speaking, with little variation, the same language; their physical conformation, pursuits, manners, architecture, superstitions, and productions of the country, presenting a striking uniformity. This tribe, like others on the coast, embraces a great many subdivisions, under petty chiefs, of from 15 to 20 miles square, but forming combinations, to more or less extent, by general custom and superstitious laws, continually harassing each other by family quarrels and petty jealousies. They are, nevertheless, industrious in their habits, not fond of wandering far from their homes, and are imitative and desirous of improvement.

Wars occasionally take place between two or more of the subdivisions; but, when they have occurred heretofore, the slave trade was generally the exciting cause. With the extinction of that direful cause, its lamentable consequences it is hoped may be hereafter averted.

Every town and village has its headman, who is subject to a king—generally an old man, to whom, as well as to the aged in general, great respect is paid. These kings and headmen do not appear to exercise despotic authority. An accused person is tried by the ordeal of drinking red water, a decoction of sassywood, or by a general palaver, which decides the innocence or guilt, and determines the punishment.

Their towns are assemblages of small conical huts, placed without order, sometimes on the banks of rivers, but are most frequently hidden by the surrounding woods, to which they retreat when attacked by an enemy. These towns exhibit much pleasing harmony and good nature, having altogether the order and features of one great family. Polygamy is universal, the number of wives being the measure of a man's wealth; yet, nothing like indiscriminate licentiousness is to be seen. The men perform no servile labor, but pass most of the year in careless indolence, except the months of February, March, and April, when the towns appear to be deserted by them, excepting one or two hoary-

headed patriarchs; all others being busied in cleaning and burning off their farms.

At this time the whole line of coast presents an interesting spectacle from the sea—volumes of smoke by day, and numerous blazing fires at night. The planting of rice and cassada is then left to the women, to whom all further labor is resigned until the crops are safely stored in their houses. The men then betake themselves to their usual pursuits and amusements. They often seek employment among the colonists, in order to get a supply of tobacco and cloth for themselves, and beads for the women. When they have anything to sell in the colony, the women, with their children strapped to their backs, carry the articles on their heads, while their lordly husbands walk on before, each bearing a knife or a gun.

The children, soon after their birth, are exposed naked to the rays of the sun, and the manner in which they are nursed is anything but gentle; but they are very healthy, and few die in infancy. The boys, eleven or twelve years old, completely throw off all maternal restraint, deeming it unmanly to be longer controlled by a woman. Nothing will make a native boy in the service of the colonists run away sooner than being struck by a female.

Their mechanical and agricultural implements are exceedingly simple—the latter being merely a hatchet for the men to cut down the bushes and trees; and a small hoe, three inches broad, for the woman to plant the rice with, which, when ripe, is cut down with a common knife. They cook rice admirably, and all their peculiar dishes are highly seasoned with pepper. They live principally on vegetables, but are fond of animal food—snakes, guanas, and monkeys being among their highest luxuries; and they are accused of not being averse to cats and dogs. Smoking and drinking palm wine (and rum, when it can be had) is the *summum bonum* of their existence. They rarely, however, drink to excess; but are fond of games of hazard, which they play with large beans. They do not gamble, however, to the extent of some tribes in the interior, who first stake one limb, and then another, until the whole body is forfeit, and the unsuccessful player becomes the slave of his antagonist.

By the labor of the missionaries a syllabic alphabet has been constructed for the Bassa language, which, although harsh, is metaphorical; the figures being drawn from natural objects. It is believed that there exists a similarity of construction, and no great disparity in the elementary sounds of the languages of the tribes extending from the Galinas to Cape Palmas. Such alphabets, therefore, may prove extensively and eminently useful.

The coast from Bassa Cove to Sinou presents the same monotonous features as that to windward, only interrupted at New Cess river, and between Trade Town and Little Culloh river, where there are two elevations near the coast, of which "Highland Peak," the southernmost, is 240 feet high; directly back of it is the "Tobacco" mountain, 880 feet; the "Nipple," 218 feet high; and abreast of it, the "Pobamo rock," directly upon the coast.

The light winds and smooth sea which prevail, with the smoke on shore and the mist to seaward, would render sailing along the coast

exceedingly tedious, if the scene were not enlivened by numerous canoes which put off from the shore, six to eight miles distant, and, paddling alongside, in noisy competition seek to gratify curiosity, or dispose of fish, fruit, and fowls, for bread, pork, tobacco, and any kind of clothing. These canoes usually contain from two to four men each, squatted upon their hams, with their feet behind them, and nearly every one naked; the best attired having only a kerchief about the loins, and an old straw hat upon the head.

So much are these people at home in the water, that when a canoe upsets, the crew, with as much nonchalance as if it were in a shallow stream, right it, and taking hold of each end, sway it to and fro lengthwise, until the water is nearly all swashed out; two of them, alternately, rather roll than clamber in, and, seated at each end, jerk their legs to and fro rapidly along the bottom; and thus, with the flat of their feet, bail it perfectly dry.

One of this amphibious race came on board while we were sailing down the coast, and left his companion, a mere lad, in the canoe, which was made fast to the ship. We were moving so rapidly through the water that the tow-line parted with the strain, and the canoe, propelled only by one paddle, could not keep up with us. The man who had left her was on the poop, and, after regarding for a few moments the ineffectual efforts of his companion, he made a single ejaculation, walked to the gangway, descended the side, and letting himself into the water, swam to his canoe.

The people along the coast, protected, as they imagine, by their gree-grees, which they purchase from their priests, have no fear of sharks; and it is certain that this voracious fish gives preference to the flesh of a white man. Repeatedly a boat has been capsized containing but one white man among its crew; and yet that man has been singled out and destroyed, while the rest were not even molested. The escape of the native may be owing to the peculiar mode in which he swims—a mode which appears ungraceful to the beholder, but may prove the safeguard of the swimmer. I have noticed that this people swim overhanded, with their bodies parallel to the surface of the water, which they splash by the movement of their hands and feet; but my observation has been limited both as to time and space, and it may be that it is to the odor of the skin, or a difference in the taste of the blood, that the preference of the shark is to be attributed.

Between the St. John's and the Sinon river there are several streams coming down from the interior, but all are shallow and mostly difficult of access. First, the "New Cess," where was the last slave mart between Cape Mount and Cape Palmas. There are here masses of sienite upon the beach and a range of hills stretching inland. Next, the "Little Culloh," south of the highland peak, and accessible to boats in fair weather, and with a good landing just below it. Then follows the "Grand Culloh" river, with its entrance barred up at this season; and the "Tembo," which has a good landing on its southern beach; "Sestos" river, where a slave factory was long established; the "New" river, coming in by "Diabolito rock;" the "Broom" river, at the mouth of which is Bahyah rock, sixty feet above the sea; and the



"Sangwin" and the "Grand Bouton" rivers, the latter having a bluff 260 feet on its southern shore, and the "Yulee" shoal before it.

There are many rivulets besides these streams, all pouring down, even in this dry season, immense volumes of water, but none of them admitting vessels drawing more than six feet water, except the "Sangwin," which at the flood has upwards of ten feet water upon its bar, within which it is spread out and is navigable but for a short distance.

From the Sangwin to Nifou is the Kroo country, inhabited by an interesting race. The extent of their territory inland is not accurately known, but supposed not to exceed twenty miles, as they have no towns, except upon the coast. The general aspect of the country is champagne, and it is densely wooded, but mostly free from marshes. Its chief vegetable productions are rice, cassada, yams, and plantains. The rice which it produces is valued by traders along the coast for its superior whiteness. The rivers which run through it are not large, and do not probably rise at any great distance from the coast, although the Krooman, whose ideas of distance are far from exact, represent them as extending a great way inland. They are full of banks and shoals, which obstruct navigation.

In the Kroo country there are but five towns: "Little Kroo," the northernmost; "Settra Kroo," the chief town; "Kroo Bah," "Nana-kroo," and "Willstown." A few small villages, inhabited by strangers or slaves, are said to be scattered over the intermediate space, and at a greater distance from the shore, for the purpose of cultivating the land. This small district is considered more populous than any along the coast. The inhabitants are employed by all the vessels trading between Cape Mesurado and Cape Palmas as factors, interpreters, and as auxiliaries to the crews, to save them from exposure in boats. The Kroomen who thus employ themselves are seldom less than fifteen or more than forty years of age. Those who remain at home are chiefly employed in agriculture and a few in fishing. They rear also a few cattle. The land seems to form a common stock, and not to descend by inheritance. Each man settles where he pleases, and the labor is performed chiefly by the women, assisted by domestic slaves.

The commerce of the Kroomen is carried on principally by barter, and the articles in greatest demand among them are leaf-tobacco, cotton cloth, handkerchiefs, fire-arms, knives, and bar-iron. The last they manufacture into implements of husbandry. For these articles they exchange palm-oil, a little ivory and rice, and occasionally supply ships with fire-wood, plantains, cassada, and sometimes with bullocks. They paddle in very small canoes to ships eight or ten miles from the shore, with not more of these articles than will procure for them a few leaves of tobacco—counting their toil and hazard as nothing. Their chief article of barter, however, is their labor to captains and traders on the coast. This is the source from whence they derive by far the greater portion of their imported commodities. They have long been the exclusive intermediate dealers between vessels trading on this part of the coast and the people of the interior; and while the slave trade flourished, it employed a great many hands. Since the abolition of that trade, they have sought other lines of service; and at Sierra Leone, 350 miles to the north, there were 800 of them employed in one year.

The form of their government is monarchical; but the "*old men*"—the aristocracy of the country—possess considerable influence, and the power of the monarch is small, except when supported by them. Each town has a chief, who is designated as king to strangers; but there is one chief who is considered superior, and rules over the whole. The power, however, of the superior chief is very great in his own district, and the office, it is probable, is hereditary. At the same time the children of the greater chiefs work as laborers in clearing the ground, while they are young men, in exactly the same manner as the lowest of the people; nor are they to be distinguished on ordinary occasions by their attire, or by superior respect being paid to them.

With respect to the principal monarch, his power is seldom exercised; and instead of being the source of all authority, the fountain of justice, the original proprietor and ultimate heir to all the land, he is in general no more than the last referee in important disputes, and the person in whose name business with other tribes or countries is transacted. A general war must be carried on in his name, but independent of the concurring voice of those headmen who possess the greatest share of talent and activity. His power is probably far less than that of some of his subordinate chiefs. This remark applies not only to the Kroomen, but to all the African tribes not of the Mohammedan faith.

A king usually names a vice-king, who, on the death of the former, succeeds him in sovereign authority. A mourning cry of several days' continuance takes place on the death of a king, during which time the succession is arranged. The body of a deceased king must be interred with the honors due to his rank before his successor can be recognised. The possession of the body is therefore the first thing aimed at by competitors for the throne.

Wars are not frequent among them; but the inhabitants of the different towns sometimes have very serious quarrels. When at war, all Kroomen who are made prisoners are released on the payment of a ransom. They neither kill nor sell them. Prisoners of other tribes are enslaved or put to death. The submission of Kroomen to their superiors is carried so far, that, if one of the foremen commit a theft, the rest will run any risk, and resist every temptation of reward, rather than reveal it; and if there be no other mode of saving their superior from disgrace and punishment, they will assume the crime, and suffer its penalty. Among themselves, theft is punished by whipping. The punishment of adultery is by fine. Murder *may* be punished with death, but it, also, may be atoned for by a pecuniary fine. Witchcraft is always punished capitally; but instances of it are rare.

Among Kroomen no offence is punishable with slavery, nor is any Krooman permitted to be sold on any account whatever; but, while the slave trade continued, they were notorious for kidnapping and selling the Bushmen, who came down to the coast for the purpose of trade.

Kroomen are seldom very tall; but they are well made, muscular, vigorous, and active. They wear no clothes, except a piece of cloth or a kerchief wrapped around their loins; but they are fond of obtaining hats and old woollen jackets, which they are allowed to wear in their own country in the rainy season. They are extremely sensible to cold during this season, but never appear to suffer from the heat.

They are generally gay and cheerful in their dispositions, and frequently talkative and noisy, often evincing much talent for mimicry. They seldom speak English well, and they understand it but imperfectly. They are very fond of adopting what man-of-war sailors call "pursers' names," such as "pipe of tobacco," "bottle of beer," "tin pot," "pea soup," half dollar," "after breakfast," &c. They are very sensitive; and, if harsh and angry expressions are used towards them, become sulky and intractable. But they will bear even a sharp blow, if their negligence deserves it, provided it seems to be given more in jest than in earnest.

In their general conduct, they are more deliberate than impetuous; and, although not a brave race, they are less cowardly than the tribes immediately above and below them.

Among themselves they are exceedingly hospitable; and when absent from their country, those who are unemployed are supported by those who are receiving wages. In their expenditures they are rigid economists, a little tobacco being the only luxury which they allow themselves; in every other respect, they are content with the bare necessities of life. A small quantity of ship-biscuit was the only article of provisions taken by those who accompanied me in my boat expeditions. Although fond of rum, they never buy it, and never drink to excess when it is given to them; and their clothing on board of a man-of-war consists only of a flannel shirt and drawers, and a straw hat. On board of trading vessels they wear their shore attire, and the cost of their clothing is insignificant.

The residue of their gains is converted into such goods as are most valuable in their own country. In eighteen months or two years a sufficient stock has been collected, and the Krooman returns home with his wealth. A certain portion is given to the head man of the town; all his relations and friends partake of his bounty, if there be but a leaf of tobacco for each; and his mother, if living, has a handsome present. All this is done in order "to get him a good name;" what remains is delivered to his father "to buy him a wife." One so liberal does not long want a partner. The father obtains a wife for him; and, after a few months of ease and indulgence, he sets off afresh to different parts of the coast, from Sierra Leone to Fernando Po, to get more money. By this time he is proud of being acquainted with "white man's fashions," and takes with him some raw, inexperienced youngsters, whom he initiates into his profession, taking no small portion of the wages of the *élèves* for his trouble. In due time his coffers are replenished; he returns home, confirms his former character for liberality, and gives the residue of his wealth to his father "to get him another wife." In this way he proceeds for ten or twelve years, or more, increasing the number of his wives, and establishing a great character among his countrymen; but scarcely a particle of his earnings, except in the article of wives, is at any time applied to his own use.

A Krooman sometimes presents his favorite wife with one of his front teeth, which he has extracted for the purpose; and he mourns for a departed friend by shaving all the hair from the back or one side of his head.



The name "Krooman" is said to be a corruption of the term "crew-men," because of their general employment among vessels visiting the African coast. Among this people polygamy exists universally, and slavery to some extent; although slaves are bought only from other tribes, and are never sold to foreigners, or to any person out of their own tribe. Their houses are built of a square form, of sticks, covered with bamboo plaited, and the roof of leaf-thatch; and the floor is of plaited bamboo, raised eighteen inches on cross-pieces; and the door and loft above are not sufficiently high to permit an adult to enter without stooping, or to stand erect. There are, generally, three rooms in each house, separated by partitions of plaited bamboo. The fire-place is made principally of hard clay, near one corner of the house, where is the only window, which serves both to admit light and open a passage for the smoke. The smoke penetrates the interstices of the loft above and preserves the rice, which would otherwise be destroyed by insects.

Their furniture consists, mostly, of a few cooking utensils; the floor answers for bed, table, and chairs; and their pillow is a round stick of wood. Their dress is a piece of cloth wrapped about the loins. Their devotions are, superstitiously gazing on the moon, and a feast on the first day of the moon, among the head men, and devotional walks in a thicket called the "devil's bush;" and they depend on amulets or gree-grees for protection and defence. The latter are purchased from the gree-gree doctors, for different sums of money, according to the purposes for which they are designed. These amulets are sheep's horns, or small pockets, filled with herbs and palm-oil and dirt, made by the conjurer or doctor. These doctors are a distinct class of men, who come into the profession hereditarily—the heads of the families teaching their children the craft. The children destined to this profession enter early upon their studies under some doctor—sometimes as early as seven or eight years of age—and are distinguished by a peculiar straw dress.

These doctors profess a knowledge of herbs and roots, and to have the means of curing diseases, and are called to relieve the sick and afflicted; but their greatest reputation is derived from their imagined supernatural knowledge. The Krop people consider death and sickness as caused by witchcraft, and they employ and rely upon the doctors to point out the person who has, by witchcraft, caused these evils. The person who is designated as guilty of the crime of witchcraft is arrested by the soldier king, and condemned to the ordeal of sassy-wood. The bark of the sassy-wood is powerfully narcotic, and a strong decoction of this the person condemned is forced to drink; and after he has drunk it he walks to and fro, exclaiming, "Am I a witch?" "Am I a witch?" while one of the executioners walks behind him replying, "You are a witch," "You are a witch," and thus continues until he either throws off the poison from his stomach, when he is pronounced innocent, or it operates as a cathartic, when he is declared guilty, and compelled to take more of the decoction, and is subjected to other cruelties which cause his speedy death. When pronounced innocent, there is great joy and triumph among the friends of the accused, who march through the town dancing, singing, and firing guns, and the conjurer resigns his

fee to those who employed him. These shocking scenes of the ordeal by sassy-wood were of almost daily occurrence in former times, but have been much less frequent since the establishment of missions among them. Sometimes this sassy-wood ordeal is used to decide questions between individuals; and they voluntarily drink it to prove and settle some disputed points. It is one of the most prevalent and cruel of African superstitions, and is practised among nearly all, if not all, the tribes of Africa.

The laws of the Kroo people form a body of customs, handed down by tradition from past generations, interpreted and enforced by the general council, who also enact occasional special laws, which are generally suggested or dictated by the doctor or conjurer. The laws are imperfect, inconsistent, and unfair. If one man loses anything and accuses another of having stolen it, the accused is required to drink sassy-wood water to prove his innocence. The ordeal of sassy-wood is, therefore, a penalty for almost all crimes, and exerts a powerful restraining influence on the community. When the sassy-wood so affects the accused as to condemn him, his friends may buy him off from death for different sums of money, according to the wealth of the family accused; but few are thus saved, in consequence of the poverty of the friends of the accused, and because, if once rescued, he is liable to be re-accused for any trifling offence. The ordeal of sassy-wood is frequently made to decide points of honor, precisely like the custom of duelling in the United States.

The leading motives of the Kroo people are sensuality and vanity. The men employed by vessels on the coast, and by traders as factors on shore, are industrious; but on the plantations, and in their towns, the men are idle, and the women perform most of the labor. The men build the houses and clear the plantations; but the women plant, watch, cultivate, and gather and beat the rice, and cut and bring the wood, and perform all the labor about the house; and especially those who are old and incapable of other labor, are constantly and industriously engaged in making salt, by boiling down sea-water. Salt is a principal article of trade with the interior tribes.

The women seldom eat with the men, except a man's head or favorite wife, who superintends the cooking, and first tastes the food before he partakes of it.

The system of polygamy gives rise to jealousies and many quarrels among the women. All lawful wives are purchased when children, and, on attaining a suitable age, are taken to their husbands. Besides these there is a class of women who go and live with any man they choose, and leave him for any other at pleasure. When one or more of these leave a man and run to another, the one to whom they resort fires guns, and his lawful wives rejoice with him; because they regard it as adding importance to their husband, and it relieves them from a portion of their labor. There appears to be a strong affection between parents and children, and brothers and sisters; but polygamy doubtless lessens the affection between husbands and wives.

Kroomen are passionate, but cowardly; fond of war and hunting, but have little skill in either. When specially intrusted with property they may be expected to be faithful; but if they can slyly steal, they

are apt to do it; and in case one of their number informs against the thief, it is the law that the informer shall pay for the stolen property.

With respect to intellectual improvement, the condition of the Kroomen may be considered as stationary. It is universally admitted, that if a Krooman were to learn to read and write he would be put to death immediately. Distinction, respect, power among his own countrymen, as soon as age permits it, are the high objects of each one's ambition. He is trained up in the habit of looking forward to these as to all that is honorable or desirable. His life is spent in seeking them by the only means which the customs of his country allow; and when possessed of them, every exertion is used to train others in the same ways, in order that he may keep and enjoy what he has acquired with so much labor. All this is supported by superstition; and under the cloak of superstition are cruelty and injustice. Who shall break through these shackles? Premiums have been proposed to Kroomen if they would settle at Sierra Leone, or emigrate to the West Indies; but take away from them their desire of respect and distinction in their own country, and they are deprived of every motive for that industry and self-denial which procures for them, at present, a preference over other nations.

The indifference of Kroomen to the arts and comforts of the whites would make one regard them as a very dull race of men. A Krooman and a Mandingo were shown an English clock. It was a new thing to both of them. The Krooman eyed it attentively for about a minute, but with an unmoved countenance, and then walked away to look at something else, without saying a word. The Mandingo could not sufficiently admire the equal and constant motion of the pendulum; his attention was repeatedly drawn to it; he made all possible inquiries as to the cause of its motion; he renewed the subject next morning, and could hardly be persuaded that the pendulum had continued to "walk," as he called it, all night. In general the case is nearly the same. Kroomen have little or no curiosity about things which are of no use in their own country; they are careless about our comforts and luxuries; none of them have been rendered necessary by habit, and they would often be inconsistent with the principal objects of their pursuits. But they are sufficiently acute and observant when occasion calls their minds into action.

They have not the use of letters, and will not permit their children to learn; they talk miserably bad English; and, living by daily labor, which is paid for in goods, they have no occasion for manufactures of their own. They have, therefore, but few opportunities of displaying peculiar talent. They make their own canoes, several of their implements of agriculture, &c., and some trifling musical instruments; and they sometimes plead in their own defence with much art. The evidence against one examined on a charge of theft was so strong, that few men would have had the boldness to deny it. The culprit, however, began a long speech with expressing his sorrow that the judge was not born a Krooman, and proceeded to enlarge on the superior ability he would, in that case, have possessed to distinguish between truth and falsehood in all cases wherein Kroomen were concerned, not forgetting the security against deception which he might possibly have obtained by means of those fetishes of which white men know not the



value nor the use. Had the judge possessed but these advantages, he would have known, he argued, how much more safely he might rely on *his* veracity than on all the evidence produced against him, although it was backed by the unfortunate circumstance of the stolen goods being found in his possession.

A Krooman will never sell a Krooman, or allow him to be sold by others, if he can prevent it. Partly from their general usefulness on the coast, partly from the probability that the sale of a Krooman would be severely revenged, they have gone about everywhere in slave-ships and to slave factories, and were active agents in the slave trade, without any more apprehension of being sold themselves than if they were white men. At home their numbers make them formidable to their neighbors, and they seldom seem to be engaged in war but when great divisions exist among themselves; few, therefore, are ever sold.

Nearly all the vowels of their language are pronounced very short; the consonant indistinct, with occasionally a strong nasal sound, particularly in the numbers two and three; an apostrophe after a word marking that short breaking off of a sound (without dwelling on the last letter or connecting it smoothly with the first letter of the next word) which is common in many languages on the coast.

The country from Cape Mount to Cape Palmas is an inhabited strip along the seacoast, with a wooded desert behind it, which separates it from the more populous interior, and the coast tribes are ingenious and persevering in their endeavors to obstruct the intercourse of strangers with those residing inland.

As much by drifting as by sailing we reached Sinou, where a Liberian schooner and a square-rigged vessel were at anchor; and one of the latter was in sight, bearing down from the north. The anchorage is an exposed one for large vessels, but smaller ones find a partial shelter from the southwest wind, and its accompanying heavy sea, behind Bloobarre Point. The Sinou, a small but placid river, was selected about eighteen years ago by colonists from Mississippi and Louisiana, with a few from South Carolina, who, after acclimating at Monrovia, founded the town of Greenville on the right bank, just above the river's mouth.

From the sea this settlement presents an attractive appearance. Directly abreast of it the shore curves inwards, and then stretches to the north, a long line of yellow beach, fringed with a deep forest. To the south are two shallow bays, separated from each other by projecting crags of ferruginous rock, the curved beach of sand bordered like that of the northern shore. At the northwest extremity of the northernmost bay is the promontory of Bloobarre, a broad, high rock, its surface bare and smooth to the summit, which is covered with luxuriant foliage. At the inland base of the promontory are the brown, conical huts of the Bloobarre tribe. Outwards, in a line with the promontory, and at half a cable's length distance from it, is a ledge of detached rocks, washed smooth by the surf, which at low water are covered with sea-gulls; and between the two is the bar.

Immediately after crossing the latter, the river, which is about sixty yards wide, opens short to the right, round the bluff promontory, and in fifty yards turns sharp to the left by a low, sandy point, immediately

opposite to which, near the southern shore, are two smooth, rocky islets—the nearest one bare, the farthest capped with vegetation—presenting a fine contrast between the iron-tinted rock and the rich green upon its summit. Ascending the river there is a low, sandy peninsula on the left, which becomes wider and more elevated until reaching the settlement half a mile distant.

The opposite bank is high, with several abrupt patches of ferruginous rock. Greenville faces the sea, and the river flows behind it. It is regularly laid out, and Mississippi avenue, with a row of dwellings on one side and open to the sea on the other, is a delightful promenade. The houses I considered by far the neatest I had seen—two of them were quite handsome two-story ones; and the gardens were in better condition than those of Monrovia. There are about sixty houses and between three and four hundred inhabitants in the settlement. The churches are the least reputable features of the place; but, although unprepossessing in their exterior, their congregations were creditable in costume and deportment. My visit was at the time of the annual meeting of the Baptist association, and the members of that persuasion thronging into the settlement gave it quite a lively appearance.

There are a number of mechanics in Greenville, particularly carpenters, and in the outskirts of the town I saw a steam saw-mill, to which lumber was rafted from the river by an artificial canal. The Bloobarre district, opposite to the settlement, is very properly described by the Rev. Mr. Gurley as high, rich, and inviting, and he judiciously points out the summit of the promontory as an eligible site for a light-house.

Above Greenville were founded the settlements of Rossville and Readville; but the country around them, although slightly rolling, is subject to inundation. The soil is composed of stiff clay overlaid with vegetable mould, excepting the river bottoms, which are made up from the deposits of annual inundations. Rice is the principal growth relied upon as an article of food; but, like the settlements on the Junk and the St. John's, the colonists do not cultivate sufficient for their own consumption. A great quantity is, however, raised by the natives; and such is the productiveness of the soil, that slave vessels, when that baleful traffic was at its height, resorted to the Sinou to purchase their stores of rice. The principal article of export at present is palm-oil; but much attention is now being paid to the culture of the coffee-plant, which, in beauty and fragrance of foliage and flower, equals the orange tree, and far surpasses it in the utility of its fruit. Its deep-green leaves and snow-white blossoms would remind one of the orange, if its delicious perfume, borne on the wind, had not anticipated the comparison.

The river, although deep within the bar, is navigable only seventeen miles to the falls, beyond which it runs shallow and obstructed, through the same belt of wilderness which lies behind the colony inland throughout its entire length, and constitutes the great barrier to the more speedy improvement of settlements along the coast, and the civilization and conversion of the natives in the interior. The forest is dense beyond conception. The crowded branches of the trees, twisted and interlaced, each bearing its full crop of foliage, form one wide

canopy, which the sun looks upon but cannot penetrate; while beneath, shrubs and climbing plants weave themselves into tangled and impenetrable thickets. The timber of many varieties is harder and heavier than any in the United States, the live oak excepted, and much of it, even when seasoned, will not float in water. There are also others, corresponding to our pine in lightness; and whether for houses, ships, or furniture, the mechanic need never be at a loss for a selection. The caoutchouc or India-rubber tree grows also large and abundant here; its stems, branches, and leaves emitting copiously the viscous fluid which is elsewhere so profitable an article of commerce.

The domesticated cattle are small in size, but there is a large wild breed, having short horns, with hides nearly destitute of hair. There are many deer in the forest, and leopards are occasionally seen. In consequence of the dense undergrowth near the coast, the range of the elephant is quite far in the interior. A good deal of ivory is from time to time brought down; and from the inequality of many of the tusks, it may be inferred that more elephants die of disease than are killed by the natives. Lizards and chameleons are common; but it is averred that serpents are rarely, and venomous ones *very* rarely, seen. But three kinds are, I believe, known to the colonists; and although the natives are unquestionably acquainted with others their accounts, are confused and unintelligible.

This section of country is thinly inhabited by a mild and inoffensive race, who are fond of agriculture, and represented as the most industrious of any on the coast, but as very filthy and disgusting in their habits. They form one of the divisions of the Great Bassa tribe. Through the head man of the principal village on the Sinou I met three natives, who represented themselves as coming from a country ten days' journey inland. A day's journey in Africa is about twenty-five miles; but as the natives never clear obstructions from their path, making always a detour to pass them, and even where there are no obstacles preferring a zigzag road to a direct one, their country cannot be more than 150 miles from Greenville; but whether directly inland, or diagonal with the coast, I could not ascertain. From the density of the forest through which they travelled, they took no notice of the bearing of the sun at various times of the day, and could give no other clue than that they came from the highlands to the sea.

From their account, I inferred that their country is not a mountainous one. They represented the climate as but little colder than that of the coast; and their representation was confirmed by the scantiness of their attire, being a single cloth about the loins, worn pendant instead of being passed in and out between the legs. Their country abounds, they said, with goats, sheep, and cattle, and the two first would have supplied them with skins for garments if the climate were a cold one. On the other hand, they stated that they possessed a breed of dogs with long hair, whereas the few to be seen along the coast are almost devoid of any hair whatever. They have neither crocodiles nor horses, and little camwood or ivory, but a great deal of palm-oil. The nut-bearing palm-tree is known to be confined to the seaboard, and the crocodile delights in the muddy deposits of wide-spread estuaries; but the camwood does not grow, and the elephant is never found



on soil which, subject to inundation, cannot sustain his enormous weight. I can only reconcile these conflicting accounts by the conclusion that these men came from a country just beyond the belt of forest between the coast and the interior, and not more than 70 or 80 miles in a direct line from the sea. They were unquestionably Bushmen, and, excepting some Arabs of the desert, the wildest and shyest beings I have ever seen. They were under the medium stature, but exceedingly broad-chested and muscular. Their bodies were long, their legs unnaturally short, and their whole appearance indicated great strength combined with extraordinary activity.

From a single interview, although a prolonged one, it would be unwise to form a decided opinion; but, the impression left on my mind was, that with equal native shrewdness, they evinced less duplicity than characterizes the tribes along the coast. From Tolon, themselves, they named the following tribes as inhabiting the intermediate country, commencing with the seacoast: "Twah," "Nenvoo," "Ghepoh," "Tygepoh," "Drapoh," "Nafou," "Sapoh," "Cabadeh," "Tatroo." Notwithstanding their uncouth and savage appearance, these men, after their first shyness wore off, exhibited much social feeling, and a marked love of humor.

The Sinou is navigable to as great a distance as the St. Paul's, but its banks are less thickly settled, and there is less water on its bar; but the soil is fertile, and the heaviest vessels built for the coasting trade can enter the river with facility. The first settlers were unquestionably energetic and industrious; and from the aspect of Greenville, I should judge that there has been no great relaxation. There is throughout the place a pleasing aspect of prosperity, and I consider it the prettiest settlement I have seen in Africa.

The rivers "Dehvoeh," "Coroo," and "Teeroroah," are the principal streams flowing into the Atlantic between the Sinou and the Garraway, the southern line of the republic. The coast preserves its low, monotonous character, only throwing up a sufficient number of detached elevations to prevent its being classified as one unbroken level. The first of these interruptions is a solitary hill abreast of Kroo rock, about ten miles below Sinou. Twelve miles further, south of the Coroo, are three elevations, one of them 260 feet in height. Twenty miles beyond is a hill just within Sesters Point, 210 feet high; and in a line with it, a short distance inland, is a range commencing at Flat Hill, and becoming mountainous as it stretches into the interior; and in a northeast direction from it, the Sugar Loaf shows isolated 730 feet in height. At New Sesters was the last slave factory between Cape Mount and Cape Palmas. South of Grand Sesters is Table Hill, 190 feet high near the shore, with the Paps, two rounded summits, a few miles inland; and from thence to the Garraway, the southern boundary of the republic, are five or six hillocks, mostly contiguous to the shore.

The imports of the Republic of Liberia, on which duties were paid for the year ending September 30, 1851, amounted to \$166,000. The exports, of which no account is kept, may be safely estimated at a much larger sum, as along the entire coast commerce increases rapidly.

From the Garraway to Cape Palmas is the Atlantic coast of territory settled by the Maryland Colonization Society. At the latter point the

coast line tends abruptly to the east, along the Gulf of Guinea, as far as Cape Lahore. Between the Garraway and the first named Cape, besides the hill of Kabla, 290 feet high, near the shore, there are but three elevations visible from the sea, of which Flat Mountain is 1,090 feet in height; all else is level forest.

Cape Palmas is a bold promontory, in a marked geographical position, where the Atlantic suddenly swerves to the left and forms the Gulf of Guinea. From the current which sweeps into the gulf along the coast, all vessels bound in that direction avail themselves of it and pass within sight of the Cape, which must eventually attain great commercial importance. The extremity of the Cape is crowned with a light-house, and is separated from the main land by the Hoffman river, which has from three to seven feet water upon its bar, and is navigable but a short distance from its mouth. The fine headland, the scattering houses upon its summit, the rocky islet on one side, and on the other, across the river, the wide extent of country, part forest and part prairie, present, from the anchorage, a beautiful appearance. The rocky islet, formerly used by the natives as a receptacle for their dead, is now called Russworm's island, in honor of the first colored governor of the colony. It is small and irregular in its outlines, the chafing of the sea having worn deep fissures in its sides. Between it and the peninsula is a narrow channel, practicable only for boats. Back of the Cape are seen houses of colonists, and the conical peaks of native huts, which, from the sea, appear to be confusedly intermingled. In the distance, shooting up from the plain, or overtopping the woodland, are many detached hills, one of them to the north (Mount Vaughan) rendered conspicuous by the buildings of an Episcopal mission.

On visiting the shore we pulled by a snug cove, with rocky extremities, but a smooth sandy beach between, just within the pitch of the Cape, and, crossing the bar without difficulty, landed at a small stone wharf just within the river's mouth. Immediately at the head of the wharf is a large stone warehouse, from whence a good winding road leads to the summit. On this broad elevated platform are the colonial settlements of Harper and Latrobe, with two native villages between them. The village of Harper consists of one wide street, with the government house, the custom-house, a number of private dwellings, and at its northern extremity the light-house, besides a large stone building under construction, intended as an orphan asylum.

From this settlement a broad McAdamized road leads by the native villages, through Latrobe, to Mount Tubman, three miles distant. Latrobe consists of a number of small farms, with the dwellings neatly enclosed, stretching some distance on both sides of the road. The first native village, within which is the royal residence of the king, contains about 200 thatched huts and 1,000 inhabitants: the second one, about half a mile from it, below the hill and nearer to the river, has about 300 inhabitants. The Grebo tribe, to which they belong, owns the territory from Fishtown to the Cavally river, but are almost wholly confined to the seacoast, their territory being about thirty miles in length, by six to eight inland.

Turning aside from the road, by far the best I have seen in Liberia, I entered one of the largest huts of the principal village. The walls

were plastered inside and out, and the thatched roof projected all round, two feet beyond them. There were three low doors, one in front and one on each side. Suspended to the wall, opposite to the front entrance, were from forty to fifty white wash-hand-basins, and before them, on the mud floor, were eight or ten large stone jars. According to the quantity of crockery thus exhibited, is the estimated wealth of the proprietor. A fire was burning on the floor between the two side-doors, and two piles of cut wood were suspended from the rafters, as a reserve store for wet weather. Over the fire was a frame for rice in the ear, and many bunches, hung to the rafters, were designed for seed. In one part small beams were thrown across which supported a rude flooring, with a ladder to ascend to it, made to trice up and held by a hook. There were two men, one woman, and a child, in the hut, which was far more spacious within than one would suppose from its external appearance.

The natives seemed less sprightly and intelligent, and certainly, as far as costume can indicate it, are less civilized than any I have seen in immediate contact with the colonists. But there is said to be a slight improvement. Formerly, a narrow piece of cloth in front constituted the whole attire; now, a corresponding piece is worn behind, but the appearance is disgusting. Yet even here fashion has its votaries, and none but the aristocracy can aspire to the color of the season.

I likewise visited the Fetish House, which in its exterior presented no perceptible difference from the others. The idol, made of wood, was about fifteen inches high, a misshapen figure between that of a monkey and a man, with a small, dirty feather drooping from its head. It was fenced in on three sides, and in the enclosure were some tin pots and trumpery, all covered with dust. There was a fire in the corner of the hut, and a woman, with a child in her arms, seated beside it. These people regard their Fetish as an evil spirit, whom in evil times they seek to propitiate. They have no regular time for worship. Some years back the last human sacrifice was offered. A man of this village, believing it necessary to sprinkle human blood upon his Fetish, in order to avert some threatened calamity, employed another to kill a boy for him. But the employer was obliged to fly, and will be severely punished by the tribe should he return.

There are eleven new houses being built by the colonists, besides the Orphan Asylum and the Methodist church, and there was a great demand for building materials. In other respects there were few indications of prosperity, and not many signs of trade perceptible to the eye of the observer; yet the value of the imports last year was nearly \$100,000, and of the exports upwards of \$80,000. The trade of the colony with the interior is very injuriously affected by trading vessels, which, being driven from the coast of the republic by a rigid enforcement of its revenue laws, carry on their traffic along the shores of this colony almost within sight of Cape Palmas.

On the road from Harper to Latrobe I met two ox-carts, drawn by two small oxen each—one of them belonging to the society, the other the property of an individual. I likewise saw a native mother feeding her child in a peculiar manner. The little thing was laid between her knees, face upward, and its feet towards her. With one hand the



mother held it down, and with the other filled its mouth from time to time with soft boiled rice, which was smoking-hot. When the mouth was crammed full, she pinched the infant's nose until the rice was swallowed. They think that a child never gets sufficient nourishment from the breast, and that to thrive it cannot be stuffed too freely.

There is here a public farm of sixteen acres, of which ten were in cultivation when I saw it, and the remainder was used as pasturage. There were some coffee-trees, and the cassada, sweet potatoes, plantains, and Indian corn, were in cultivation. The coffee-trees did not seem to flourish, and altogether the farm presented a less thrifty appearance than it doubtless would have done had it been individual property. It is ever the case, that management by deputy will never compete with the superintending vigilance of the owner. I mean to cast no reflection on Dr. McGill, the colonial governor, whose time is engrossed by more pressing and important cares.

In the two colonial settlements there are 122 voters and about 800 inhabitants. I was there on an election day, and the place was quite lively. The people were in their best attire. The men gathered in groups near the building where the poll was held, while the women stood about in the shade, principally near the stands, where some of their sex displayed, on long tables, cakes, fruit, etc., for sale.

A short time ago it was unanimously decided to declare the independence of the colony, and this day the voters were assembled to elect commissioners, to proceed to the United States and confer with the Maryland Colonization Society on the subject. At the same time, delegates were to be elected to a convention for forming a State constitution. This act, seemingly premature, is, I believe, the offspring of necessity. I am inclined to think so from what I see around me, and am convinced of it by the concurrence of the Society at home, which in most respects has heretofore so wisely directed the affairs of the colony. The election was conducted in a quiet and orderly manner, and I am satisfied that in its climate, soil, geographical position, and the general character of its settlers, this colony possesses the elements of undeveloped prosperity. The settlement has heretofore been retarded in its growth by the number of emigrants sent out, who were either infirm in health, feeble from age, or indolent in their habits and of listless characters—too many recently emancipated from slavery, with no idea of freedom beyond exemption from labor. A better time is approaching; and when the colony becomes an independent State, it will compete with its sister republic to the north, in the advantages it presents to the enterprising settler.

In and around Cape Palmas, for four or five miles from the shore, the soil is a sandy prairie, but soon presents clay, covered with vegetable mould; and in the valleys between the clumps of hills, which are seen in every direction, is a rich alluvial soil, capable of supporting an immense population. Among these valleys are found most of the native villages.

Just below the principal village is the grave of King Freeman, who was in life a warm friend of the colony. In a rude enclosure, just large enough to contain them, are two huts, and in one of them is the royal grave, unmarked by mound or tombstone. The broad-brimmed

straw hat of the deceased alone indicates the spot. Without the door of the hut are some old clothes torn into shreds, and many fragments of pottery. The former are torn, and the latter broken, because the natives believe that the spirit of the departed can unite them at will, while in their dismembered condition they present no temptation to the living. The opening to the enclosure is never secured; it is directly beside the thoroughfare between the two villages, but seems neither to attract nor repel the people continually passing to and fro. Except the stranger, monkeys from the adjoining wood seem to be its only visitants; and the latter visit it unmolested, for although this people are fond of them as food, and will destroy them elsewhere, they hold them sacred in a grave-yard.

King Freeman did not, as is usual, name a successor. Great funeral honors were paid to his remains by the colonists, which so gratified the tribe that it was conceded that no one should be made to drink red water, except about half a dozen who were accused of "making witch for the king," and the privilege was granted to the colony of naming his successor. The one selected was Peroh-Nah (Yellow Will,) a stout mulatto, with a frank, intelligent countenance.

The ordeal of sassy-wood may now be considered obsolete with that portion of the tribe in the immediate vicinity of the settlements; and in some of the villages of the tribe labor is forbidden on the Sabbath; but from what I could learn, compensation is expected for the lost day.

The Grebo language is different from that of the Bassa's, although they have some affinity to each other. It has been reduced to a systematic form by the Rev. Mr. Wilson, and is used in the schools and religious exercises of the mission. The Grebo tribe is estimated at about twenty thousand, and they are represented as docile and industrious, but much addicted to thieving. The above named reverend gentleman, who resided for some years among them, states that although each tribe has its king, there is not a feature of royalty in the government: so different is it from the arbitrary despotism which prevails in certain parts of Africa, that it may be regarded as the purest specimen of republicanism to be found in the world. The people govern, and they govern *en masse*. All proceedings, whether legislative, judicial, or executive, are conducted by the people in a body, and the majority enact, abolish, suspend, and execute all laws whatever. No office is hereditary, and there is nothing like caste. Kings, chiefs, men, women, and children, eat, drink, sleep, and mingle together in the common affairs of life with as little restraint as the herds of cattle which graze in their meadows. Kings think it no detraction from their dignity to perform the most irksome drudgery, and to labor side by side with their poorest subjects, provided there be no one to witness it who would probably deride them for it. In some respects the government is patriarchal. Each family in the male line keeps itself entirely distinct from the others; and there is always one representative head, who is the guardian of the property and the protector of the rights of the family. When a family becomes too large to transact business without inconvenience, it is divided, and subordinate heads are appointed. These subordinate heads manage all their affairs separately, except in

matters of great moment. The head man of each family receives and holds all the money and other property of its different members. He is accountable, however, for the disbursements of the common stock. He is required to purchase wives for the young men, and is responsible to the people at large for the payment of all fines which may be imposed upon the members of his family. However successful any one individual may be in amassing property, he cheerfully deposits almost the whole of it in the house of the head man of his family, and seems amply repaid for his toil in having the satisfaction to know that he has contributed largely to the common stock.

The old men who stand at the head of their respective families are much revered; and when they unite on a particular measure, their influence is very considerable, and their decisions seldom reversed. But there does not seem to be anything like political organization among them.

There are four prominent offices among them: the Bodio, the Tihbawah, the Worabank, and the Ibadio. The two first are sacred offices. The Bodio is the protector of the people and the town. His house is of a different shape and much larger than the others; it is something of a sanctuary, and is a place of refuge for all culprits who fly to it. If a criminal can enter the house and place his hands upon the great greegree, no one but the Bodio can remove him. In front of the Bodio's house important oaths are administered, and perjury under such circumstances is guilt of the deepest dye. If the Bodio puts his hand upon a person condemned to drink sassy-wood water, the latter goes free. He wears a plain iron ring round his ankle, as the badge of his office, and if that should by any means be removed or lost, he would lose his office and be subject to a heavy fine. He is subjected to a great many singular restrictions. He must never sleep out of his own town; the rain must never touch his head; and he is never allowed to sit down, except upon a monkey skin, which he always carries in his hand. He is restricted from certain kinds of food, and on burial days he is not allowed to partake of any food whatever until the sun has gone down; and he can wear only one kind of cloth.

If a stranger has a complaint against any individual in the town, he prefers it before the Bodio, who calls a town council and presides at it, but has no power to decide any case without the concurrence of the people. The wife of the Bodio is a person of still greater sanctity; any lewd intercourse with her is always most severely punished. On no consideration whatever would she be allowed to be absent from home one night. If the town burns down, and months elapse before it is rebuilt, she must sleep on the spot, whatever be the state of the weather.

The Tihbawah is the judicial head of the soldiery. He is subjected to nearly the same restraints as the Bodio.

The Worabank is commander-in-chief in time of war. The interpretation of his name is Tower Tail, and its origin is a little singular, but in strict accordance with the notions of Africans. Here, as everywhere else in the world, the post of most danger is the post of greatest honor. Hence the rearmost rank in retreat, which is very common in their warfare, is the place of greatest danger, and he who has bravery



enough to occupy it, becomes the commander-in-chief. His authority is never exercised until war is declared, and then he has more power than any other individual in the community. He is subject to none of the restrictions of the Bodio and the Tibbawah, but eats, drinks, and wears what he pleases.

The Ibadio is associated with the Tibbawah, and is something of a civil-magistrate among the soldiery in time of peace. But the most powerful and efficient organization is the soldiery. They constitute the bone and sinew of the body politic. It embraces the chief part of young and middle aged men. They fight the wars of the people, and they repay themselves abundantly for their toil and exposure by their high-handed and exorbitant exactions both in peace and war. It is an elective body. No one can be admitted into its ranks without paying an initiation fee, which is usually a bullock. They receive a great many presents to avert rapacity, and they help themselves to much that is not given to them. They never deprive a man of his property, however, without alleging some crime against him. The charge of witchcraft is one they can always bring forward with some plausibility, and the result of the prosecution, if nothing worse, always turns a bullock into their hands. But the people understand their interests, and save their property, and perhaps their lives, by voluntary offerings.

There is no other restraint but interest on this powerful body. As it is constituted by representation from each family, and as all fines imposed upon an individual must be paid out of the family stock, they naturally restrain each other, and prevent much lawless aggression. They do not often oppose the influence of the old men, and rarely, if ever, reverse their decisions; but the old men are careful not to infringe upon the prerogatives of the soldiery. The latter enforce all decisions that are passed by the people in a collective capacity. If any one refuses to pay a fine that is imposed, it is only necessary to report the case to the soldiery, who are always glad of an opportunity to interfere, for, besides collecting the fine, they always abundantly indemnify themselves for their trouble. In time of war they may seize and kill any cattle they please, and the owner does not dare demur. If he charge one of them with stealing, they employ the following test: The accused is taken to the water-side, and an open basket is provided. The accuser is told that if the basket holds water the soldier is guilty, but should it run out the charge is pronounced a false accusation, and he who has preferred it is fined three-fold for his audacity. The mode of trial is well understood, and few expose themselves to the snare.

There are no other magistrates in this tribe, and all cases of dispute are submitted to the people for adjudication. They have no written laws, and all their decisions are made *viva voce*. They never inflict capital punishment; and although the husband often castigates his wives, sometimes severely, the children are indulged to the utmost, and are never whipped. Banishment is the highest penalty ever enforced. Almost every trespass is punished by fine, which is regulated not so much by the nature of the offence as by the ability of the delinquent to pay. For stealing, the thief is required to restore two, three, and sometimes four-fold.

The charge of witchcraft is the most disgraceful that can be alleged. They have several trials by ordeal. One of them is to dip the hand into boiling oil. If it can be submerged in the oil and taken out uninjured, the accused is declared guiltless; if not, he is condemned. Another, more serious, and more universal along the entire coast, is the trial by sassy-wood water, which is regarded as an infallible mode of detecting witchcraft. The bark of the tree is procured, and from it a strong decoction is prepared, which the accused is enjoined to drink. If he disgorge it, he is pronounced innocent; if not, his death is inevitable. This trial by sassy-wood *is always voluntary* on the part of the accused; he is not compelled to drink it, but death is preferable to the suspicion of witchcraft, and many who perish drink it in the confident belief that it will not injure them.

The will of the people is the law of the land, and no man can prosper who does not conciliate public opinion. If any one be more successful than the rest of his tribe in accumulating property, he becomes the subject of jealousy, and some charge is sure to be preferred against him. This would seem to be a great drawback to industry; but it is not so with Africans. They scarce know what discouragement is. If the whole property of an individual be swept away by fire, or the violence of a mob, in good glee he immediately sets to work to repair his loss. Enterprising men have seen the whole of their property destroyed three or four times in their lives without manifesting despondency, or relaxing their efforts to retrieve their fortune.

The families of the tribe are so much interwoven, and their marriages one with the other are so frequent, that the interest of each community requires that it should deal equitably with others; and they have too many mutual drawbacks upon each other to allow any high-handed or unjust procedure. Litigated points between individuals are frequently referred to a third party.

The treaties of the tribe are held sacred, and they have several ways of ratifying them. The most common is the following: The parties concerned take each a mouthful of water from the same vessel and eject it in the presence of witnesses, at the same time calling upon God, the devil, and the town, to bear testimony. They have another, that is employed on extraordinary occasions, particularly when a league of amity is for the first time established. An incision is made upon the backs of the hands of persons belonging to the two parties, with the same knife. By this means their blood is mingled, and they become one people. Treaties thus ratified are as inviolable as any in the world, and may be relied upon with implicit confidence.

Much that I have said, especially respecting the tribes, apart from what I gathered myself, is derived, some of it *verbatim*, from Dr. McDowell and the Rev. Messrs. Connelly and Wilson.

Anxious to obtain information respecting the river Cavally from Bishop Payne, of the Episcopal church, who resided in its vicinity, I started, on the 16th February, at 7 a. m., in company with Commander Barron and Surgeon Sinclair, on a visit to Half Cavally, the seat of the mission. Landing at Harper, we walked to Latrobe, and from thence embarked on Shepherd's lake, which lies lengthwise parallel to the sea, from which it is separated by a high and narrow strip of sand. In

an hour and a half we arrived at the head of the lake, after passing Half Grahway and Grahway, two populous villages of the Grebo tribe, situated on the narrow strip between the lake and the sea. These villages are fenced in by palisades, eight to ten feet high, with an opening at each extremity, barely wide enough for one person to enter at a time, and so low as to require him to stoop in passing. Thence, walking a quarter of a mile, we came to another very large village, and a few hundred yards further to a smaller one, inhabited by the same tribe. There were many women and children about, looking contented and healthy; but there were very few men visible, they being absent preparing the fields for planting rice the approaching rainy season. The few males who fell under my observation were better clothed than the females; and this remark is applicable to all the tribes I have seen. The men seem here to have invaded the privileges of the other sex in two particulars—by evincing a greater love of dress, and by monopolizing the use of needle and thread. The husband mends the household garments, while the wife splits wood for the fire. There is but a single variation in the costume of the female—the occasional change of color in the only article they wear, which bears the same proportion to a civilized garment that a waist-band does to a pair of unmentionables.

After passing this second village—one mounted on a jenny, and the other two in hammocks borne by natives—we travelled along the sea-beach about three-quarters of a mile; and then turning to the east, traversed a sandy prairie for two miles, and reached a rocky knoll at its extremity, close upon the sea, where we found some look-outs from an adjoining populous village. Pursuing our course between the palisades of the latter and the sea, we passed through another populous village, and entered immediately upon the precincts of the mission.

A little beyond the palisade of the last village was a broad avenue, lined with wide-spreading cocoa-palm trees, leading up a gentle ascent, on the summit of which was the mission-house. A little below it, on the left, we noticed the foundation and part of the superstructure of a large brick church.

The mission-house is a frame building, and although seemingly commodious, resembles imperfect joint-work, presenting the appearance of having been constructed in detached parts at different intervals.

The plan pursued in this mission seems to be the best adapted of any I have observed or heard of for reclaiming the African. By the usage of the tribes, females are contracted in childhood, the future husband making payment in advance, and the father binding himself to deliver up his daughter at the marriageable age. Heretofore the females taught in the missions have been claimed by those to whom they were affianced, after having, with apparent conviction and zeal, embraced and for some years practised Christianity. The consequence was, that they fell back to barbarism. In like manner the males, returning to their tribes, would sink under the pernicious influence of polygamy. But Bishop Payne (I believe that the credit of the suggestion is due to him) obviates the first difficulty, by paying the price for a female child and receiving her into the mission, to be educated by the accomplished and devoted ladies connected with it. In like manner, the boys are



taught a trade, as well as their catechism and grammar, by the reverend gentlemen; and when the former attain the age when heretofore they have left to rejoin their tribes, employment is given them by the mission, and every inducement presented to marry one of the educated native females, and settle within the precincts. In this way there is now a village on the mission premises of about sixty native Christians, occupying comfortable houses erected by themselves. This is a slow and expensive, but seems to be the only effectual, mode of retaining in the Christian fold those who have been reclaimed from barbarism, and whose descendants may prove powerful auxiliaries to future messengers of the Gospel.

I ascertained that it would be almost impossible to cross the bar of the Cavally river, except in a boat during the most favorable season; I would not, therefore, detain the John Adams to proceed to the mouth of that river, as it might take weeks to return against the current to Cape Palmas, although the distance is but fifteen miles. I determined, therefore, to postpone my visit to the Cavally until the arrival of the steamer, when it was my purpose to make a second and more thorough examination of the rivers along the coast, crossing the bars with the vessel, and ascending with her as far as possible.

While at Cape Palmas, Dr. McGill, to whom I am indebted for much information and great kindness, took me through the hospital containing the sick among the recently-arrived emigrants. As far as I could judge, the type of fever in each case was a mild one. Since it has been discovered that quinine can be administered in large doses, even during the paroxysm of fever, the mortality among colored emigrants, I am assured, has been diminished fifty per cent. Such is the adaptability of the constitution of the colored man to this climate, that, after recovering from sickness, he can attain and preserve his previous health and strength. On several occasions, when I could scarce endure the fiery rays of the sun, colonists would be walking along bare-headed, who laughingly declared that they rather enjoyed than suffered from the heat. The white man, on the contrary, never becomes acclimated; and after he has undergone the ordeal of the fever, if he do not recruit his strength by seeking for a time a more congenial climate, he will, according to his vital energy, meet with a lingering or a speedy death.

The day after returning from Cavally I visited Rock Town, a missionary school station, situated on a small stream where it flows into the sea, four miles from Cape Palmas. A projecting rocky point protects the mouth of this river from southerly winds; but the stream is shallow, and its bar is rarely crossed by anything larger than a canoe. Just within the extremity of the point is a Grebo village, and a short distance from it, on the opposite side of the stream, is another, with its Fetish House, without the palisade. They are populous, and although, like all the rest, their huts are placed irregularly, the spaces between, as in the others also, are kept scrupulously clean.

We found the Rev. Mr. Horne, with sallow complexion, laboring in his God-like vocation, teaching Pagan children the rudiments of Christianity. While above stairs, his pallid child had just passed through, and his wife was undergoing the ordeal of the climate, with none but native Africans around them, and without necessary comforts for the

sick. As I have before said, this illustrates the true chivalry of the Gospel.

The country about Rock Town is prairie, with palm-trees so beautifully interspersed as to convey the idea expressed by Major Laing, in describing another section, of having been planted expressly to adorn the landscape.

The soil is sandy, but far from unproductive ; and in Mr. Horne's garden I saw, besides a great variety of vegetables, fruits, and flowers, indigenous to the climate, a number introduced by him from the West Indies.

The day after my visit to Rock Town I was attacked by the fever, and from thenceforth had not sufficient strength to make further observations.

We returned slowly to Monrovia against the current, but, on our arrival there, learned that the steamer had neither been seen nor heard from.

Being prostrated a second time, in consequence of exposure to the sun, I requested Commander Barron to proceed to Half-cape Mount river, whither President Roberts had gone with a detachment of 250 Liberians. But, unable to land there from weakness, I was forced to consider my reconnoissance at an end.

We proceeded to Sierra Leone, where the John Adams left me ; and at the expiration of sixteen days, during which the yellow fever made its appearance, I embarked for home, and arrived in New York on the first of May.

In this report I have presented things exactly as they appeared to me, and at every place I visited endeavored to procure reliable information, for thus I interpreted my instructions.

It now remains for me to speak of the best place to disembark an exploring party ; the proper inland route ; the precautions to be taken ; and the difficulties to be encountered.

I consider Monrovia the best place for a party to ride out the fever in. I believe it to be as healthy as any other settlement in Liberia, and good accommodation and nurses for the sick can there be procured. Besides, the intercourse of its inhabitants with the interior is more frequent, and extends farther inland, than from any other point I am aware of along the coast. Millsburg, at the head of the navigation of the St. Paul's, I recommend as the proper rendezvous, and the point from whence to take up the inland march.

Bopora, a populous native town, of which I have spoken in this report, lies directly in the path which it seems to me should be pursued, and it should be reached as soon as possible, and made the pivot of operations for advancing inland, and keeping up a communication with the sea-shore.

The march from Bopora should be regulated by the nature of the country, and the distance and direction of the nearest mountain range, which must form the water-shed between the tributary streams of the Niger and those which flow into the Atlantic. That range attained, if it trend southeast, as it most probably does, it might be followed to the parallel of Cape Palmas, with a particular eye to the country on its Atlantic slope, and thence the expedition might descend and make its way to the sea.

The obstacles to be encountered would be a dense forest, (through which, in many places, a path could only be cleared with the hatchet,) wild beasts, the frequent morasses, the jealousy and possible treachery of the natives, and sometimes the scarcity of food.

The party should consist of as few whites as possible. The commander; an officer to take his place, should he perish; a physician, who should also be a naturalist; and some twelve or fifteen colonists, would perhaps be sufficient.

The energy of the white man is indispensable for such an undertaking; but, from the hostility of the climate to his race, as few as possible should embark in it. The main body, therefore, should be citizens of Liberia; but as no man of resolution and judgment would undertake to head them unless they were under military organization, and bound to follow as long as he led the way, I suggest that if an expedition be organized, the government of Liberia consent to its citizens enlisting under the flag of the United States, and thereby subject themselves to its martial code. All ought to possess physical stamina, and the whites, especially, should be in the vigor of life, and, if possible, natives of our southern States.

I have considered it my duty to collect in my route all the information I could as to the commerce of the places I visited. It has been presented in the body of this report, and few, I presume, are aware of the present magnitude and the annual increase of the commerce of Western Africa. For further information on this subject, I herewith submit the official reports of the British colonial possessions, transmitted with the Blue Book to both houses of Parliament.

Our own proportion of the African trade is very large, and might be rendered yet more extensive by forming treaties with the principal independent tribes along the coast. England has already negotiated eighty such treaties, her plenipotentiary being sometimes a lieutenant in her navy. To her honor be it said, that while looking to her commercial interests, she is not forgetful of the claims of humanity, and inserts, wherever she can, a clause prohibitory of the slave trade. She is, however, accused of reviving that trade in another form, and I submit in the appendix (No. 1) a proclamation of the President of Liberia on the subject.

I will illustrate the advantages of the treaties to which I have alluded. It is a custom of the tribes, that all traffic with the natives shall be transacted through the kings and head men; in other words, the head men and kings are the sole factors of their respective communities. By a stipulation of the treaty, these potentates become responsible for the payment of debts contracted with an English trader. Should payment be withheld when due, (for the credit system prevails here as well as in the Christian world,) the trader seeks a British man-of-war, and communicates the circumstance to her commander, and the latter repairs instantly to the place and enforces payment. Not so with the American trader. If his debtors are disposed to defraud him, he has no redress; and as native breach of faith is not unfrequent, he cannot fairly compete with the Englishman. With this report I submit two maps, on a large scale—one of the republic of Liberia, and the other of Maryland in Liberia—together with views of



Monrovia, the residence of President Roberts, Cape Palmas, Mount Vaughan, and Russworm's monument.

One other thing I feel impelled to say from a sense of duty, and do so most reluctantly. But, if we do not wish to be accused, and perhaps justly accused, of observing the letter and neglecting the spirit of our treaty stipulation with regard to the slave trade, we will substitute small but efficient steamers for sailing-vessels upon the African station. Judging of the future from the past, I venture to say that the frigate *Constitution* is of little more use in suppressing that trade than if she were in the Bay of Fundy. Nor can it scarce be otherwise. From Goree to Cape Palmas, ranging from fifty to eighty miles from the coast, is a misty region of alternate calms, light winds, currents, and tornadoes, with overwhelming torrents of rain, compared to which the refreshing showers of our own more favored clime are as dew-drops to overflowing cisterns. In the "*John Adams*," we were ten days making a distance which a steamer could have accomplished in thirty-six hours. From Monrovia to the island of St. Jago, vessels are often forty days on the passage, which a steamer could make in five. In one direction along the coast it is a drift with the sluggish current: in the other, it is working up against it with light and baffling winds.

I do not say that the vessels we have on the coast do not sometimes protect our commercial interests, or are not otherwise serviceable. I have mentioned the "*John Adams*" assisting a merchant vessel in distress; and I submit in the appendix (Nos. 2, 3, and 4) some letters from President Roberts, expressing acknowledgments for benefits derived from our squadron. But, from the causes I have enumerated, our cruisers can visit very few places compared to the number that should be visited, and, as the log-books will testify, often remain long at their anchors, or make yet more lengthy passages to Madeira to recruit—a passage which, under canvass alone, in the teeth of the trade-wind, is often more prolonged and more wearing to the ship than if she came directly home.

The service on the coast of Africa needs an incentive. Great Britain has twenty-seven vessels-of-war employed in the suppression of the slave trade on that coast, and a large proportion of them are steamers, mostly small ones. Her naval officers have every inducement to seek service on that station, for he who attains to a higher grade by the death of his superior in rank, retains it permanently, and does not, as with us, hold it but temporarily. The consequence is, that the English far surpass us in activity on the coast of Africa. A very slight incentive would cause service on that coast to be coveted by our officers and crews. Within a few years two commanders have died on that station. If the two senior lieutenants in the squadron had been promoted permanently, the files of the department would now exhibit more applications from lieutenants for service on that station than all others combined. And thus of every other grade, except the highest, which, living on its honors, should be influenced by higher aspirations.

The arrogance of British officers heretofore, precludes the idea of an agreement to search respectively the vessels of either nation. It is a privilege which cannot be safely conceded to them, and we must at all hazards protect the integrity of our flag. But, for the honor of our coun-

try and the protection of its commerce, it is to be hoped that small steamers will be substituted for our sailing-vessels on the African coast, and that some incentive may be presented which will infuse greater activity among them, and render them almost ubiquitous in the neighborhood of the slave marts, and the parts of the coast frequented by our traders, instead of making tedious passages to and from a few places, some of them too remote by far, or too long lying suggestively at their anchors.

Since my return I have received intelligence from Sierra Leone of the capture by British men-of-war of three slavers, one of them American. The prostitution of our flag, now so much facilitated by sea-letters, obtained principally at the consulates of Rio de Janeiro and Havana, will continue, to our disgrace, until we have vessels on the coast of Africa propelled by steam, and manned with crews and commanded by officers who are stimulated, the one by increased pay and the hope of prize-money, and the other by permanent promotion when vacancies are caused by death. The climate is a trying one, and, as in battle, the places of those who perish should be filled by the survivors.

I do not permit myself to dwell on the necessity of incorporating into the international code a clause declaring the slave-trade piracy under any flag; nor on the frequent decisions of our legal tribunals, (caused by the want of such declaration,) which have so discouraged our officers. Of this want, and its attendant evil consequences, the government has been long advised.

In estimating the amount of our African trade I have been careful not to exaggerate, and rejected every item not based on authentic data; but there is so much traffic along the coast in articles never entered at a custom-house, that I have reason to believe I have given twenty-five per cent. less than the actual imports; and as the profits are very great, that the exports exceed the estimate nearly one hundred per cent. Apart, therefore, from the suppression of the slave trade, our commerce with the west coast of Africa needs the protection of an efficient force—efficient more in its power of locomotion than in the number of its guns.

A knowledge of the disadvantages under which our countrymen labor who trade along that coast, has induced these concluding remarks, and I trust they will not be considered inappropriate.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, &c.,

W. F. LYNCH, *Commander, U. S. N.*

HON. J. C. DOBBIN, *Secretary of the Navy.*

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No. 1.

*Proclamation.*

Whereas Messrs. Hyde, Hodge & Co., of London, contractors with her Britannic Majesty's government to furnish laborers from the African coast for the West Indies, have sent some of their ships to the coast of the republic, offering an advance of ten dollars for every person who may be induced to emigrate; and whereas the extinction of the slave-

trade has left large numbers of predial and other laborers in the possession of the chiefs and principal men of the country, while the offer of ten dollars each is nearly equivalent to the amount formerly paid for slaves during the prevalence of the slave trade, and which operated mainly in producing and sustaining the wars by which the country was distracted; and whereas certain refractory chiefs are reported to have engaged with the agents of said company to furnish a number of laborers, and are further known to have in concealment near Grand Cape Mount a number of the unhappy victims of their predatory excursions; and whereas complaint has been made to the government that persons are held, to be sent off without their voluntary consent, or the consent of their natural guardians: therefore, to prevent the abuses and evils which might otherwise result from the enterprise—

Be it known by this proclamation to all whom it may concern, that the law regulating passports must be strictly observed; that vessels carrying, or intending to carry away immigrants, must come to this port with their immigrants on board to obtain passports, in order that an opportunity may be presented to the government to ascertain whether the emigration be free or constrained. Every violation of the law regulating passports will be visited with the utmost penalty of the law in that case made and provided.

Done at Monrovia, this twenty-sixth day of February, in the year of  
[L. s.] our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-three, and of the  
republic the fifth. J. J. ROBERTS.

By the President:

H. TEAGUE, *Secretary of State.*

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No. 2.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

*Monrovia, November 16, 1851.*

SIR: I have just received despatches from Grand Bassa, announcing that a formidable attack was made yesterday morning, about 7 o'clock, upon the settlement of Bassa Cove, by a force of about one thousand Fishmen and Bassas. After a vigorous contest of nearly one hour, they were repulsed with considerable loss on their-part. The enemy has retired; but, it is confidently believed, only to return and to renew the attack with increased force and vigor. The settlers there are worn down with watching and fatigue, and cannot sustain themselves much longer, without aid in men and ammunition. This is earnestly craved in the despatches, and we are now preparing to render them the desired succor; but it will require some two or three days to make the necessary preparations here, and as many more days perhaps will be occupied in reaching the scene of hostilities. As the natives expect and dread a reinforcement from this place, their object will be to anticipate it, and to strike a decisive blow ere it arrive. The presence of your vessel here, just at this crisis, seems most opportune and providential. I have, therefore, to throw myself, and the perilous and exposed condition of our leeward settlements, upon your friendly consideration, and solicit, most earnestly, that you will make it convenient to take me to Bassa, a distance of only about sixty miles. I



am of the opinion, as are also those whom I have consulted, that the presence of your vessel there, and the interest in our cause which your taking me down would indicate to them, would effectually deter the natives, and stay an immediate blow, and thus afford an opportunity to reinforce Bassa Cove and put it in a state of security.

I hope, sir, you may find it convenient to lend us the aid of the presence of the ship under your command, at the scene of hostilities. Be assured, sir, it is nothing less than the call of humanity for the protection of hundreds of almost wholly defenceless women and children from the brutal rage and fury of savages; for if Bassa should be carried by them, we shall have nothing to entertain but the most gloomy anticipations for all our leeward settlements, and our numerous traders along the coast.

As it is of the utmost importance that I should, by my arrival at Bassa, anticipate an attack by the natives, I shall hold myself ready to embark whenever you shall be pleased to give me notice.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

J. J. ROBERTS, *President.*

Captain W. PEARSON, *United States Ship Dale.*

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No. 3.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

*Monrovia, January 24, 1852.*

SIR: Accompanying is a letter which I beg you will take in charge for Commodore Lavallette. I have not been able, in consequence of the numerous engagements pressing upon me just at this time, to give the commodore as full details of our campaign as I could wish; and I have taken the liberty—for which I beg your indulgence—to refer to you for such further particulars of our operations as may have come to your knowledge. I enclose herewith a copy of the communication I have addressed to the commodore.

Permit me here, sir, to present—which I beg you will accept—my sincere thanks for the services you have rendered the people of this republic in their present difficulties. I am fully sensible of the obligations we are under to you. I know, sir, that we have had your sympathies and good wishes with us in all our operations, and that you would willingly have afforded us other and more important services had circumstances rendered it necessary.

I beg to assure you, sir, that your kindness will never be forgotten by your most obedient, humble servant,

J. J. ROBERTS.

Captain S. BARRON,

*U. S. Ship John Adams.*

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No. 4.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

*Monrovia, January 24, 1852.*

SIR: I have had the honor of receiving your esteemed favor of December 12th, by Captain Barron, of the United States ship John

Adams, which vessel, on hearing of our difficulties with the natives of Grand Bassa, you very kindly despatched to aid us "in such measures as might be deemed necessary to establish full confidence in the minds of the settlers of their security, by assurances of protection to them by the naval forces of the United States when their situation needs it."

This kind feeling of concern for the security and future welfare of Liberia, and the sentiments of benevolence you so kindly express, sir, are sensibly felt and deeply appreciated by the whole people of this republic. Your goodness in sending them aid, at a time when they so much needed the countenance and support of a foreign power, to convince their enemies that they are not forgotten nor neglected in time of peril, places us under renewed obligations to your government and to yourself; and I assure you, sir, your kindness in this instance will endure with the history of Liberia, and I fancy will never be erased from the memory of her citizens. And in their behalf I have the honor to present, and I beg you will accept, sincere thanks and grateful acknowledgments.

Captain Barron arrived at Monrovia two days after my departure with a body of troops for Grand Bassa; without delay he proceeded to join us at this latter place, where he arrived and communicated with me early in the evening of the 1st instant. It would be impossible to describe to you the bursts of joy that ran through our little camp when the arrival of the "John Adams," and the object of her visit, were announced.

Having just returned to this place, and the time of the departure of the "John Adams" being up, I cannot give you the details of our movements, and must beg to refer you to Captain Barron for particulars. Our operations have been mostly inland, from ten to fifteen miles parallel with the beach, and extending along the coast about thirty-five miles. The presence of the "John Adams" at certain points of the coast along the line of our march, no doubt, had a favorable effect, and tended much to keep the natives near the coast in check, and also afford us certain means of communication.

I have great satisfaction in stating that Captain Barron readily met my wishes in placing his ship off such points of the coast where it was deemed his presence would be most important; and also tendered his services to assist us in any other way consistent with his duty and instructions.

I am happy to inform you that the campaign, though it has been an exceedingly fatiguing one, has terminated quite to our satisfaction. We have given the deluded enemy a chastisement which he will long remember, and, I doubt not, will relieve us from any trouble or difficulty in future in that quarter. We had two severe engagements; in the last we had four killed and twenty-seven wounded, two of whom have since died; the others are doing well, and will probably recover.

With many thanks, high regard and esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, most respectfully, your obedient and humble servant,

J. J. ROBERTS.

Com. E. A. F. LAVALLETTE,

*Commanding U. S. Naval Forces west coast of Africa.*





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